

THE  
ODYSSEY  
OF  
HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, ESQ.

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VOLUME THE SECOND.

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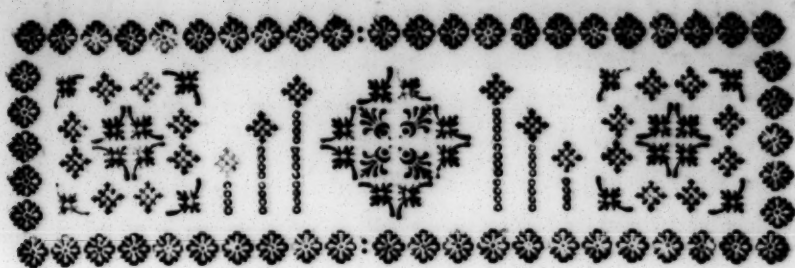
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M DCC LXVI.







T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca.

*Ulysses takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean time, Ulysses awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; till the Goddess appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures; upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.*

**H**E ceas'd; but left so pleasing on their ear  
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear.  
VOL. II. A

## 2 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms :

The grateful conf'rence then the king resumes.

Whatever toils the great Ulysses past, 5  
Beneath this happy roof they end at last ;

No longer now from shore to shore to roam,  
Smooth seas, and gentle winds, invite him home.

But hear me, princes ! whom these walls inclose,  
For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows 10

With wine unmix'd, (an honour due to age,  
To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage).

Though labour'd gold and many a dazzling vest  
Lie heap'd already for our godlike guest ;  
Without new treasures let him not remove, 15

Large, and expressive of the public love ;  
Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,  
A gen'ral tribute, which the state shall owe.

This sentence pleas'd : then all their steps address'd  
To sep'rate mansions, and retir'd to rest. 20

Now did the rosy finger'd morn arise,  
And shed her sacred light along the skies.  
Down to the haven and the ships in haste  
They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.  
The king himself the vases rang'd with care ; 25  
Then bade his followers to the feast repair.

A victim ox beneath the sacred hand  
Of great Alcinous fall, and stains the sand.  
To Jove th' Eternal (pow'r above all pow'rs) 30  
Who wings the winds, and darkens heaven with show'rs)

The flames ascend : till ev'ning they prolong  
The rites, more sacred made by heav'nly song :  
For in the midst, with public honours grac'd,  
Thy lyre, divine Demodocus ! was plac'd.

All, but Ulysses heard with fix'd delight : 35  
He sat, and eye'd the sun, and wish'd the night ;  
Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,  
His native home deep imagin'd in his soul.

### B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 3

As the tir'd ploughman spent with stubborn toil,  
Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil, 40  
Sees with delight the sun's declining ray,  
When home, with feeble knees, he bends his way  
To late repast (the day's hard labour done):  
So to Ulysses welcome set the sun.

Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest, 45  
(The Scherian states), he turn'd, and thus address'd.

O thou, the first in merit and command!  
And you the peers and princes of the land!  
May ev'ry joy be yours: nor this the least,  
When due libation shall have crown'd the feast, 50 }  
Safe to my home to send your happy guest.

Complete are now the bounties you have giv'n,  
Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heav'n!  
So may I find, when all my wand'rings cease,  
My consort blameless, and my friends in peace. 55

On you be ev'ry bliss; and ev'ry day,  
In home-felt joys delighted, roll away;  
Yourself, your wives, your long descending race,  
May ev'ry God enrich with ev'ry grace!  
Sure fix'd on virtue may your nation stand, 60  
And public evil never touch the land!

His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd  
Benign, and instant his dismissal mov'd.

The monarch to Pontonous gave the sign,  
To fill the goblet high with rosy wine: 65  
Great Jove the father first (he cry'd) implore;  
Then send the stranger to his native shore.

The luscious wine th' obedient herald brought;  
Around the mansion flow'd the purple draught:  
Each from his seat to each immortal pours, 70  
Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.  
Ulysses sole with air majestic stands,  
The bowl presenting to Arete's hands;

#### 4 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

Then thus: O queen, farewell! be still possess'd  
Of dear remembrance, blessing still be blest'd! 75  
Till age and death shall gently call thee hence,  
(Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence!)

Farewel! and joys successive ever spring  
To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!

Thus he: then parting prints the sandy shore 80  
To the fair port: a herald march'd before,  
Sent by Alcinous: of Arete's train

Three chosen maids attend him to the main;  
This does a tunic and white vest convey,  
A various casket that, of rich inlay, 85  
And bread and wine the third. The cheerful mates  
Safe in the hollow poop dispose the cates:  
Upon the deck, soft painted robes they spread,  
With linen cover'd, for the hero's bed.

He clim'd the lofty stern; then gently prest 90  
The swelling couch, and lay compos'd to rest.

Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train  
Their cables loose, and launch into the main:  
At once they bend, and strike their equal oars,  
And leave the sinking hills, and less'ning shores. 95  
While on the deck the chief in silence lies,  
And pleasing slumbers steal upon his eyes.

As fiery couriers in the rapid race,  
Urg'd by fierce drivers through the dusty space,  
Toss their high heads, and scour along the plain; 100  
So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.  
Back to the stern the parted billows flow,  
And the black ocean foams and roars below.

Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies;  
Less swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies: 105  
Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,  
A man, in wisdom equal to a God!  
Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,  
In storms by sea, and combats on the shore;



## B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast, 110  
Wrapp'd in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.

But when the morning-star with early ray  
Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day;  
Like distant clouds the mariner descries  
Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise. 115

Far from the town a spacious port appears,  
Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whose name it bears :  
Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,  
The roaring winds tempestuous rage restrain;  
Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide, 120  
And ships secure without their hangers ride.

High at the head a branching olive grows,  
And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.  
Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess

Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas; 125  
Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,  
And massy beams in native marble shone;

On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,  
Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.  
Within the cave, the clust'ring bees attend 130  
Their waxen works, or from the roof depend :

Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide ;  
Two marble doors unfold on either side ;  
Sacred the south, by which the Gods descend,  
But mortals enter at the northern end. 135

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land,  
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand).

Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,  
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.  
His treasures next, Alcinous's gifts, they laid 140  
In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,

Secure from theft: then launch'd the bark again,  
Resum'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.  
Nor yet forgot old Ocean's dread supreme  
The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polypheme. 145

## 6 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood;  
And sought the secret counsels of the God.

Shall then no more, O fire of Gods! be mine  
The rights and honours of a pow'r divine?  
Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh severe disgrace!) 150

By soft Phæacians, my degen'rate race!  
Against yon destin'd head in vain I swore,  
And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore:  
To reach his natal shore was thy decree;  
Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee? 155

Behold him landed, careless and asleep,  
From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!  
Lo where he lies, amidst a shining store  
Of brass, rich garments, and refulgent ore:  
And bears triumphant to his native isle 160  
A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.

To whom the father of th' immortal pow'rs,  
Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with show'rs  
Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain?

Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundless main! 165  
Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,  
Ancient and great! a God above the Gods!

If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,  
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?  
Go then, the guilty at thy will chastise 170  
He said: the shaker of the earth replies.

This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship  
A mark of vengeance on the sable deep;  
To warn the thoughtless self-confiding train,  
No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main. 175

Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,  
If such thy will — We will it, Jove replies.  
Ev'n when with transport black'ning all the strand,  
The swarming people hail their ship to land,  
Fix her for ever, a memorial stone: 180  
Still let her seem to sail, and seem alone;

### B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 7

The trembling crouds shall see the sudden shade  
Of whelming mountains over hang their head!

With that, the God whose earthquakes rock the ground,  
Fierce to Phæacia cross'd the vast profound. 185

Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,

The winged pinnace shot along the sea.

The God arrests her with a sudden stroke,

And roots her down an everlasting rock.

Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprise; 190

All press to speak, all question with their eyes.

What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!

And yet it swims, or seems to swim the main!

Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:

'Till great Alcinous rising own'd the sign. 195

Behold the long destin'd day! (he cries),

Oh certain faith of ancient prophecies!

These ears have heard my royal fire disclose

A dreadful story, big with future woes;

How mov'd with wrath, that careless we convey 200

Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay,

Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command

Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand;

(A monument of wrath!) and mound on mound

Should hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground. 205

The fates have follow'd as declar'd the seer.

Be humble, nations! and your monarch hear.

No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more

With ev'ry stranger pass from shore to shore;

On angry Neptune now for mercy call: 210

To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.

So may the God reverse his purpos'd will,

Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.

The monarch spoke: they tremble and obey'd,

Forth on the sands the victim oxen led: 215

The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,

And chiefs and rulers, a majestic band.

## 8 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

The king of Ocean all the tribes implore ;  
The blazing altars redden all the shore.

Meanwhile Ulysses in his country lay, 220  
Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey }  
The solitary shore, and rolling sea.  
Yet had his mind through tedious absence lost  
The dear remembrance of his native coast :  
Besides, Minerva, to secure her care, 225  
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air :  
For so the Gods ordain'd, to keep unseen  
His royal person from his friends and queen,  
Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford  
An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord. 230

Now all the land another prospect bore,  
Another port appear'd, another shore,  
And long-continu'd ways, and winding floods,  
And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods,  
Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd, 235  
The king arose, and beat his careful breast,  
Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,  
And fought, around, his native realm in vain :  
Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in wo,  
And as he spoke, the tears began to flow. 240

Ye Gods ! (he cry'd), upon what barren coast,  
In what new region is Ulysses tost ?  
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,  
Or men whose bosom tender pity warms ?  
Where shall this treasure now in safety lie ? 245  
And whither, whither its sad owner fly ?  
And why did I Alcinous' grace implore ?  
Ah why forsake Phæacia's happy shore ?  
Some juster prince perhaps had entertain'd,  
And safe restor'd me to my native land. 250  
Is this the promis'd, long expected coast,  
And this the faith Phæacia's rulers boast ?



### B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 9

Oh righteous Gods! of all the great, how few  
Are just to heav'n, and to their promise true!  
But he, the pow'r to whose all-seeing eyes 255  
The deeds of men appear without disguise,  
'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear:  
For still th' oppress'd are his peculiar care.

To count these presents, and from thence to prove  
Their faith, is mine: the rest belongs to Jove. 260

Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,  
The gold, the vests, the tripods, number'd o'er:  
All these he found, but still in error lost,  
Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,  
Sighs for his country, and laments again 265  
To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-resounding main.  
When lo! the guardian Goddess of the wise,  
Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes;  
In show a youthful swain, of form divine,  
Who seem'd descended from some princely line, 270  
A graceful robe her slender body drest,  
Around her shoulders flew the waving vest,  
Her decent hand a shining jav'lin bore,  
And painted sandals on her feet she wore.  
To whom the king: Whoe'er of human race 275  
Thou art, that wander'st in this desert place!  
With joy to thee, as to some God, I bend;  
To thee my treasures and myself commend.  
O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,  
What air I breathe, what country I survey? 280  
The fruitful continent's extremest bound,  
Or some fair isle which Neptune's arms surround?  
From what far clime (said she) remote from fame,  
Arriv'st thou here, a stranger to our name?  
Thou seest an island, not to those unknown 285  
Whose hills are brighten'd by the rising sun,  
Nor those that plac'd beneath his utmost reign  
Behold him sinking in the western main.

10 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

The rugged soil allows no level space  
For flying chariots, or the rapid race; 290

Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,

Suffices fulness to the swelling grain :

The loaded trees their various fruits produce,

And clust'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice :

Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove 295

The bounding goats and frisking heifers rove :

Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,

And rising springs eternal verdure yield.

Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd,

Where Troy's majestic ruins strow the ground. 300

At this, the chief with transport was possest,

His panting heart exulted in his breast :

Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,

And veiling truth in plausible disguise,

Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold, 305

His ready tale th' inventive hero told.

Oft have I heard, in Crete, this island's name ;

For 'twas from Crete, my native soil, I came,

Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,

And left my children and my friends behind. 310

From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,

Whose son, the swift Orsilochns, I slew :

(With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey,

Due to the toils of many a bloody day).

Unseen I 'scap'd ; and, favour'd by the night, 315

In a Phœnician vessel took my flight,

For Pyle or Elis bound ; but tempests tost,

And raging billows drove us on your coast.

In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,

Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land. 320

But e'er the rosy morn renew'd the day,

While in th' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,

Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,

They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.

## B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. II

Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore, 325  
A hapless exile on a foreign shore.

Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd maid began  
With pleasing smiles to view the godlike man:  
Then chang'd her form; and now, divinely bright,  
Jove's heav'nly daughter stood confess'd to sight; 330  
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,  
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

O still the same Ulysses! she rejoin'd,  
In useful craft successfully refin'd!  
Artful in speech, in action, and in mind! 335  
Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours past,  
Secure thou seest thy native shore at last?  
But this to me? who, like thyself, excel  
In arts of counsel, and dissembling well;  
To me, whose wit exceeds the pow'rs divine, 340  
No less than mortals are surpass'd by thine.  
Know'st thou not me? who made thy life my care,  
Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war;  
Who taught thee arts, Alc'ous to persuade,  
To raise his wonder, and engage his aid; 345  
And now appear, thy treasures to protect,  
Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,  
And tell what more thou must from fate expect.  
Domestic woes far heavier to be born!  
The pride of fools, and slaves insulting scorn. 350  
But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state:  
Yield to the force of unresisted fate,  
And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,  
The last and hardest conquest of the mind.

Goddeſs of wiſdom! Ithacus replies, 355  
He who diſcerns thee muſt be truly wiſe,  
So ſeldom view'd, and ever in diſguiſe!  
When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs  
Againſt proud Ilion's well-defended tow'rs,

12 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

Ulysses was thy care, celestial maid ! 360  
 Grac'd with thy sight, and favour'd with thy aid.  
 But when the Trojan piles in ashes lay,  
 And bound for Greece we plough'd the wat'ry way ;  
 Our fleet dispers'd, and driv'n from coast to coast,  
 Thy sacred presence from that hour I lost ; 365  
 Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,  
 And heard thy counsels on Phæacia's shore.  
 But, by th' almighty author of thy race,  
 Tell me, oh tell ! is this my native place ?  
 For much I fear, long tracks of land and sea 370  
 Divide this coast from distant Ithaca ;  
 The sweet delusion kindly you impose,  
 To sooth my hopes, and mitigate my woes.

Thus he. The blue-ey'd Goddess thus replies.  
 How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise ! 375  
 Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring show,  
 And taste not half the bliss the Gods bestow.  
 The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,  
 And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.  
 Others, long absent from their native place, 380  
 Straight seek their home, and fly with eager pace  
 To their wives arms, and children's dear embrace :  
 Not thus Ulysses ; he decrees to prove  
 His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love ;  
 Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years, 385  
 And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.  
 But Pallas knew, (thy friends and navy lost),  
 Once more 'twas giv'n thee to behold thy coast :  
 Yet how could I with adverse fate engage,  
 And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage ? 390  
 Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore  
 The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.  
 Behold the port of Phorcys ! fenc'd around  
 With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd :



### B. XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 13

Behold the gloomy grot ! whole cool recess 395  
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas ;  
Whole now-neglected altars, in thy reign  
Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain.  
Behold ! where Neritus the clouds divides,  
And shakes the waving forests on his sides. 400

So spake the Goddess, and the prospect clear'd,  
The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.  
The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,  
And on his knees salutes his mother earth :  
Then with his suppliant hands upheld in air, 405  
Thus to the sea-green sisters sends his pray'r.

All hail ! ye virgin-daughters of the main !  
Ye streams beyond my hopes beheld again !  
To you once more your own Ulysses bows ;  
Attend his transports, and receive his vows ! 410  
If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown  
The growing virtues of my youthful son,  
To you shall rites divine be ever paid,  
And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.

Then thus Minerva : From that anxious breast 415  
Dismiss those cares, and leave to heav'n the rest.  
Our task be now thy treasure'd stores to save,  
Deep in the close recesses of the cave :  
Then future means consult. — She spoke, and trod  
The shady grot, that brighten'd with the God. 420  
The closest caverns of the grot she sought ;  
The gold, the brass, the robes Ulysses brought ;  
These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd ;  
The entrance with a rock the Goddess clos'd.

Now, seated in the olive's sacred shade, 425  
Confer the hero and the martial maid.  
The Goddess of the azure eyes began :  
Son of Laertes ! much-experienc'd man !  
The suitor train thy earliest care demand,  
Of that luxurious race to rid the land : 430

# **14 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.**

Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,  
 And proud addresses to the matchless queen.  
 But the thy absence mourns from day to day,  
 And inly bleeds, and silent wastes away :  
 Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives  
 Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.

435

To this Ulysses : Oh celestial maid !  
 Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid :  
 Else had I seen my native walls in vain,  
 Like great Atrides just restor'd and slain.  
 Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,  
 And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate :  
 Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,  
 As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n built walls in fire.  
 Though leagu'd against me hundred heroes stand, 445  
 Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.

440

She answer'd : In the dreadful day of fight  
 Know I am with thee, strong in all my might.  
 If thou but equal to thyself be found,  
 What gasping numbers then shall press the ground ! 450  
 What human victims stain the feastful floor !  
 How wide the pavements float with guilty gore !  
 It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,  
 And secret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.  
 For this, my hand shall wither ev'ry grace, 455  
 And ev'ry elegance of form and face ;  
 O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,  
 Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,  
 Disfigure ev'ry limb with coarse attire,  
 And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire : 460  
 And all the wants and the decays of life,  
 Estrange thee from thy own, thy son, thy wife :  
 From the loath'd object ev'ry sight shall turn,  
 And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.  
 Go first the master of thy herds to find, 465  
 True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind :

### B.XIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 15

For thee he sighs ; and to thy royal heir  
And chaste Penelope extends his care.  
At the Coracian rock he now resides,  
Where Arethusa's fable water glides ; 470  
The fable water and the copious mast  
Swell the fat herd ; luxuriant, large repast !  
With him rest peaceful in the rural cell,  
And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.  
Me into other realms my cares convey, 475  
To Sparta, still with female beauty gay :  
For know, to Sparta thy lov'd offspring came,  
To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.

At this the father, with a father's care :  
Must he too suffer ? he, oh Goddess ! bear 480  
Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched share ?  
Through the wild ocean plough the dang'rous way,  
And leave his fortunes and his house a prey ?  
Why wouldst not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind !  
Inform him certain, and protect him, kind ? 485

To whom Minerva : Be thy soul at rest ;  
And know, whatever heav'n ordains, is best.  
To fame I sent him, to acquire renown ;  
To other regions is his virtue known.  
Secure he sits, near great Atrides plac'd ; 490  
With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.  
But lo ! an ambush waits his passage o'er :  
Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore :  
In vain ! far sooner all the murd'rous brood  
This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood. 495

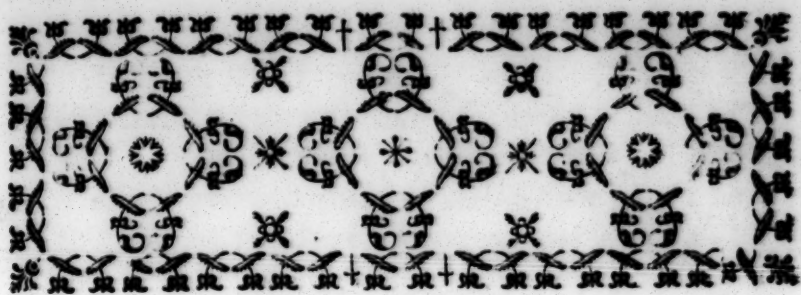
She spake : then touch'd him with her pow'rful wand :  
The skin thrunk up, and wither'd at her hand :  
A swift old age o'er all his members spread ;  
A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head ;  
Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball shin'd 500  
The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.  
His robe, which spots indelible besmear,  
In rags dishonest flutters with the air :

16 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIII.

A stag's torn hide is lapt around his reins ;  
A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains ; 505  
And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,  
Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.  
So look'd the chief, so mov'd ! to mortal eyes  
Object uncouth ! a man of miseries !  
While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air, 510  
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.







T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XIV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The conversation with Eumæus.

*Ulysses arrives in disguise at the house of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.*

**B**UT he, deep musing, o'er the mountains stray'd  
Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade,  
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,  
With cliffs and nodding forests over-hung.  
Eumæus at his sylvan lodge he sought, 5  
A faithful servant, and without a fault.  
Ulysses found him busied, as he sat,  
Before the threshold of his rustic gate.  
Around, the mansion in a circle shone;  
A rural portico of rugged stone : 16

# 18 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

(In absence of his lord, with honest toil  
 His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile):  
 The wall was stone from neighb'ring quarries born,  
 Encircled with a fence of native thorn,  
 And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke 15  
 Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;  
 Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd  
 Twelve ample cells, the lodgment of his herd.  
 Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd;  
 The males without (a smaller race) remain'd; 20  
 Doom'd to supply the suitors wasteful feast,  
 A stock by daily luxury decreas'd;  
 Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,  
 Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.  
 Here sat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd 25  
 To form strong buskins of well season'd hide.  
 Of four assistants who his labour share,  
 Three now were absent on the rural care;  
 The fourth drove victims to the suitor train:  
 But he, of ancient faith, a simple swain, 30  
 Sigh'd, while he furnish'd the luxurious board,  
 And weary'd heav'n with wishes for his lord.  
 Soon as Ulysses near th' inclosure drew,  
 With open mouths the furious mastives flew:  
 Down sat the sage; and, cautious to withstand, 35  
 Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.  
 Sudden, the master runs; aloud he calls;  
 And from his hasty hand the leather falls;  
 With show'rs of stones he drives them far away;  
 The scatt'ring dogs around at distance bay. 40  
 Unhappy stranger! (thus the faithful swain  
 Began with accent gracious and humane),  
 What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate  
 Thy rev'rend age had met a shameful fate?  
 Enough of woes already have I known; 45  
 Enough my master's sorrows and my own.

## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 19

While here (ungrateful task!) his herds I feed,  
Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed;  
Perhaps supported at another's board,  
Far from his country roams my hapless lord! 50  
Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,  
Now cover'd with th' eternal shade of death!

But enter this my homely roof, and see  
Our woods not void of hospitality.

Then tell me whence thou art, and what the share 55  
Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear?

He said; and seconding the kind request,  
With friendly step precedes his unknown guest.  
A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,  
And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed. 60  
Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find  
So just reception from a heart so kind:  
And oh, ye Gods! with all your blessings grace  
(He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!

The swain reply'd: It never was our guise 65  
To slight the poor, or aught humane despise.  
For Jove unfolds our hospitable door;  
'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.  
Little, alas! is all the good I can;

A man oppress'd, dependent, yet a man: 70  
Accept such treatment as a swain affords,  
Slave to the insolence of youthful lords!  
Far hence is by unequal Gods remov'd  
That man of bounties, loving and lov'd!  
To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd; 75  
And more, had fate allow'd, had been bestow'd:  
But fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore;  
Much have I sorrow'd, but my matter more.  
Now cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd:  
Ah perish Helen! perish all her kind! 80  
For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,  
He trod so fatally the paths of fame.

20 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

His vest succinct then girding round his waste,  
 Forth rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,  
 Straight to the lodgments of his herd he run, 85  
 Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun :  
 Of two, his cutlance lanc'd the spouting blood ;  
 These quarter'd, sing'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,  
 All hasty on the hissing coals he threw ;  
 And smoking back the tasteful viands drew, 90  
 Broachers and all ; then on the board display'd  
 The ready meal, before Ulysses laid  
 With flour imbrown'd ; next mingled wine yet new,  
 And luscious as the bees nectareous dew :  
 Then sat companion of the friendly feast, 95  
 With open look ; and thus bespoke his guest.

Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,  
 Such food as falls to simple servants share :  
 The best our lords consume ; those thoughtless peers,  
 Rich without bounty, guilty without fears ! 100  
 Yet sure the Gods their impious acts detest,  
 And honour justice and the righteous breast.  
 Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,  
 The foes of peace, and scourges of mankind,  
 To whom offending men are made a prey, 105  
 When Jove in vengeance gives a land away ;  
 Ev'n these, when of their ill-got spoils possess,  
 Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast ;  
 Some voice of God close whisp'ring from within,  
 " Wretch ! this is villany, and this is sin." 110  
 But these, no doubt, some oracle explore,  
 That tells, the great Ulysses is no more.  
 Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs  
 Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise :  
 Constant as Jove the night and day bestows 115  
 Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.  
 None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign  
 O'er the fair islands of the neighb'ring main.



## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 21

Nor all the monarchs whose far-dreaded sway

The wide extended continents obey: 120

First, on the main-land, of Ulysses breed

Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed;

As many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd;

As many lodgments for the tusky herd;

Those foreign keepers guard: and here are seen 125

Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmost green;

To native pastors is their charge assign'd,

And mine the care to feed the bristly kind:

Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,

All to the suitors wasteful board preferr'd. 130

Thus he, benevolent: his unknown guest

With hunger keen devours the sav'ry feast;

While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast.

Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,

Eumæus pours on high the purple tide; 135

The king with smiling looks his joy express'd,

And thus the kind inviting host address'd.

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,

So rich, so potent, whom you style your lord;

Late with such affluence and possessions blest, 140

And now in honour's glorious bed at rest?

Whoever was the warrior, he must be

To fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me;

Who (so the Gods, and so the fates ordain'd)

Have wander'd many a sea, and many a land. 145

Small is the faith the prince and queen ascribe

(Reply'd Eumæus) to the wand'ring tribe:

For needy strangers still to flattery fly,

And want too oft betrays the tongue to lie.

Each vagrant traveller that touches here, 150

Delude with fallacies the royal ear,

To dear remembrance makes his image rise,

And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.

Such thou mayst be. But he whose name you crave

Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave, 155

22 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B.XIV.

Or food for fish, or dogs, his relics lie,  
 Or torn by birds are scatter'd through the sky.  
 So perish'd he: and left (for ever lost)  
 Much wo to all, but sure to me the most.  
 So mild a master never shall I find: 160  
 Less dear the parents whom I left behind,  
 Less soft my mother, less my father kind. }  
 Not with such transport would my eyes run o'er,  
 Again to hail them on their native shore,  
 As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace, 165  
 Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.  
 That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,  
 Ev'n in his absence I pronounce with fear:  
 In my respect he bears a prince's part,  
 But lives a very brother in my heart. 170

'T hus spoke the faithful swain; and thus rejoind'  
 The master of his grief, the man of patient mind.  
 Ulysses, friend! shall view his old abodes,  
 (Distrustful as thou art), nor doubt the Gods,  
 Nor speak I rashly, but with faith averr'd, 175  
 And what I speak attesting heav'n has heard.  
 If so, a cloak and vesture be my meed:  
 Till his return no title shall I plead, }  
 Though certain be my news, and great my need. }  
 Whom want itself can force untruths to tell, 180  
 My soul detests him as the gates of hell.

Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove!  
 And ev'ry God inspiring social love!  
 And witness ev'ry household pow'r that waits  
 Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates! 185  
 Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,  
 His ancient realms Ulysses shall survey,  
 In blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn,  
 And the lost glories of his house return.

Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more 190  
 Shall lov'd Ulysses hail this happy shore,

# B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 23

(Reply'd Eumæus): to the present hour  
 Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.  
 From sad reflection let my soul repose;  
 The name of him awakes a thousand woes. 195  
 But guard him, Gods! and to these arms restore!  
 Not his true consort can desire him more;  
 Not old Laertes, broken with despair;  
 Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.  
 Alas, Telemachus! my sorrows flow 200  
 Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe!  
 Like some fair plant set by a heav'nly hand,  
 He grew, he flourish'd, and he bless'd the land;  
 In all the youth his father's image shin'd,  
 Bright in his person, brighter in his mind. 205  
 What man or God deceiv'd his better sense,  
 Far on the swelling seas to wander hence?  
 To distant Pylos, hapless! is he gone,  
 To seek his father's fate, and find his own!  
 For traitors wait his way, with dire design 210  
 To end at once the great Arcean line.  
 But let us leave him to their wills above;  
 The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.  
 And now, my venerable guest! declare  
 Your name, your parents, and your native air: 215  
 Sincere from whence begun your course relate,  
 And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?

Thus he: and thus (with prompt invention bold)  
 The cautious chief his ready story told.

On dark reserve what better can prevail, 220  
 Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,  
 Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place  
 Conf r. and wines and cates the table grace;  
 But most the kind inviter's cheerful face? }  
 Thus might we sit, with social goblets crown'd, 225  
 Till the whole circle of the year goes round;

24 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

Not the whole circle of the year would close  
 My long narration of a life of woes.  
 But such was heav'n's high will ! Know then, I came  
 From sacred Crete, and from a fire of fame : 230  
 Castor Hylacides (that name he bore)  
 Belov'd and honour'd on his native shore ;  
 Bless'd in his riches, in his children more. }  
 Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,  
 I shar'd his kindness with his lawful race : 235  
 But when that fate which all must undergo,  
 From earth remov'd him to the shades below,  
 The large domain his greedy sons divide,  
 And each was portion'd as the lots decide.  
 Little, alas ! was left my wretched share, 240  
 Except a house, a covert from the air.  
 But what by niggard fortune was deny'd,  
 A willing widow's copious wealth supply'd.  
 My valour was my plea, a gallant mind,  
 That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind, 245 }  
 (The sex is ever to a soldier kind).  
 Now wasting years my former strength confound,  
 And added woes have bow'd me to the ground ;  
 Yet by the stubble you may guess the grain,  
 And mark the ruins of no vulgar man. 250  
 Me Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,  
 And the fair ranks of battle to deform,  
 Me Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,  
 And tempt the secret ambush of the night.  
 Let ghastly death in all his forms appear, 255  
 I saw him not : it was not mine to fear.  
 Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel ;  
 The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.  
 But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear,  
 The rural labour, or domestic care. 260  
 To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,  
 And send swift arrows from the bounding string,



## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 25

Were arts the Gods made grateful to my mind ;  
Those Gods, who turn (to various ends design'd)  
The various thoughts and talents of mankind. 265 }  
Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,  
Nine times commander or by land or main,  
In foreign fields I spread my glory far,  
Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war :  
Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame, 270  
To Crete return'd, an honourable name.  
But when great Jove that direful war decreed,  
Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed ;  
Our states myself and Idomen employ  
To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy. 275  
Nine years we warr'd, the tenth saw Ilion fall ;  
Homeward we sail'd, but heav'n dispers'd us all.  
One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay ;  
So will'd the God who gives and takes away.  
Nine ships I mann'd, equipp'd with ready stores, 280  
Intent to voyage to th' Egyptian shores ;  
In feast and sacrifice my chosen train  
Six days consum'd ; the seventh we plough'd the main.  
Crete's ample fields diminish to our eye ;  
Before the Boreal blasts the vessels fly ; 285  
Safe through the level seas we sweep our way ;  
The steerman governs, and the ships obey.  
The fifth fair morn we stem the Egyptian tide,  
And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride :  
To anchor there my fellows I command, 290  
And spies commission to explore the land.  
But sway'd by lust of gain, and headlong will,  
The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill.  
The spreading clamour to their city flies,  
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise, 295  
The redd'ning dawn reveals the circling fields  
Horrid with bristly spears, and glancing shields.

26 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head  
 We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread }  
 On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead. 300  
 I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove;  
 (And sure the thought was dictated by Jove;  
 Oh had he left me to that happier doom,  
 And sav'd a life of miseries to come )  
 The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd, 305  
 And low on earth my shield and javelin cast,  
 I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face,  
 Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.  
 He heard, he sav'd, he plac'd me at his side;  
 My state he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd, 310  
 Restrain'd the rage the vengeful foe express'd,  
 And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast.  
 Pious! to guard the hospitable rite,  
 And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.  
 In Egypt thus with peace and plenty blest, 315  
 I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest.  
 On sev'n bright years successive blessings wait;  
 The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.  
 A false Phœnician, of insidious mind,  
 Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to human kind, 320  
 With semblance fair invites me to his home;  
 I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam):  
 Domestic in his faithless roof I stay'd,  
 Till the swift sun his annual circle made.  
 To Libya then he meditates the way, 325  
 With guileful art a stranger to betray,  
 And sell to bondage in a foreign land.  
 Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the strand.  
 Through the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,  
 Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales: 330  
 But when remote her chalky cliffs we lost,  
 And far from ken of any coast,  
 When all was wild expanse of sea and air,  
 Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare.

## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 27

He hung a night of horrors o'er their head, 335  
(The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread);  
He lanc'd the fiery bolt: from pole to pole  
Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll:  
In giddy rounds the whirling ship is tost,  
And all in clouds of smoth'ring sulphur lost. 340  
As from a hanging rock's tremendous height,  
The sable crows with intercepted flight  
Drop endlong; scar'd, and black with sulph'rous hue:  
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.  
Such end the wicked found! But Jove's intent 345  
Was yet to save th' oppress'd and innocent.  
Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life),  
With winds and waves I held unequal strife;  
For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,  
The tenth soft wafts me to Thesprotia's shore. 350  
The monarch's son a shipwreck'd wretch reliev'd,  
The fire with hospitable rites receiv'd,  
And in his palace like a brother plac'd,  
With gifts of price, and gorgeous garments grac'd.  
While here I sojourn'd, oft I heard the fame 355  
How late Ulysses to the country came;  
How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he stay'd,  
And here his whole collected treasure laid:  
I saw myself the vast unnumber'd store  
Of steel elab'rate, and refulgent ore, 360  
And brass high heap'd, amidst the regal dome;  
Immense supplies for ages yet to come!  
Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will  
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,  
What means might best his safe return avail, 365  
To come in pomp, or bear a secret sail?  
Full oft has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,  
Attesting solemn all the pow'rs divine,  
That if on Ulysses would return, declar'd,  
The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd. 370

28 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

But first the king dismiss'd me from his shores,  
 For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores;  
 To good Acastus' friendly care consign'd:  
 But other counsels pleas'd the sailors mind:  
 New frauds were plotted by the faithless train, 375  
 And misery demands me once again.  
 Soon as remote from shore they plough the wave,  
 With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;  
 Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,  
 (Stript of my own), and to the vessel bound. 380  
 At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land  
 The ship arriv'd: forth issuing on the sand,  
 They sought repast; while, to th' unhappy kind,  
 The pitying Gods themselves my chains unbind.  
 Soft I descended, to the sea apply'd 385  
 My naked breast, and shot along the tide.  
 Soon past beyond their sight, I left the flood,  
 And took the spreading shelter of the wood.  
 Their prize escap'd the faithless pyrates mourn'd;  
 But deem'd inquiry vain, and to their ship return'd. 390  
 Screen'd by protecting Gods from hostile eyes,  
 They led me to a good man and a wife;  
 To live beneath thy hospitable care,  
 And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.  
 Unhappy guest! whose sorrows touch my mind!  
 (Thus good Enmæus with a sigh rejoin'd); 396  
 For real suff'rings since I grieve sincere,  
 Check not with fallacies the springing tear;  
 Nor turn the passion into groundless joy  
 For him, whom heav'n has destin'd to destroy. 400  
 Oh! had he perish'd on some well fought day,  
 Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!  
 That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise  
 Historic marbles, to record his praise:  
 His praise, eternal on the faithful stone, 405  
 Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.



## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 29

Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,  
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost!  
While pensive in this solitary den,  
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men, 410  
I linger life; nor to the court repair,  
But when the constant queen commands my care:  
Or when, to taste her hospitable board,  
Some guest arrives, with rumours of her lord;  
And these indulge their want, and those their woe, 415  
And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.  
By many such have I been warn'd; but chief  
By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,  
Whose hap it was to this our roof to roam,  
For murder banish'd from his native home. 420  
He swore, Ulysses on the coast of Crete  
Staid but a season to refit his fleet;  
A few revolving months should waft him o'er,  
Fraught with bold warriors, and a boundless store.  
O thou! whom age has taught to understand, 425  
And heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!  
On God or mortal to obtrude a lie  
Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.  
Not for such ends my house and heart are free,  
But dear respect to Jove, and charity. 430  
And why, oh swain of unbelieving mind!  
(Thus quick reply'd the wisest of mankind),  
Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,  
A solemn compact let us ratify,  
And witness ev'ry pow'r that rules the sky! 435  
If here Ulysses from his labours rest,  
Be then my prize a tunic and a vest;  
And, where my hopes invite me, straight transport  
In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.  
But if he greets not thy desiring eye, 440  
Hurl me from yon dread precipice on high;  
The due reward of fraud and perjury.

30 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 'B. XIV.

Doubtless, oh guest ! great laud and praise were mine,  
 (Reply'd the swain for spotless faith divine),  
 If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd, 445  
 I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood.  
 How would the Gods my righteous toils succeed,  
 And bless the hand that made a stranger bleed ?  
 No more—th' approaching hours of silent night  
 First claim refection, then to rest invite ; 450  
 Beneath our humble cottage let us haste,  
 And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taste.

Thus commun'd these ; while to their lowly dome  
 The fully-fed swine return'd with ev'ning home ;  
 Compell'd, reluctant, to their sev'ral sties, 455  
 With din opstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.  
 Then to the slaves :—Now from the herd the best  
 Select, in honour of our foreign guest :  
 With him, let us the genial banquet share,  
 For great and many are the griefs we bear ; 460  
 While those who from our labours heap their board,  
 Blaspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took  
 A weighty axe, and cleft the solid oak ;  
 This on the earth he pil'd ; a boar full fed 465  
 Of five years age, before the pile was led :  
 The swain, whom acts of piety delight,  
 Observant of the Gods, begins the rite ;  
 First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,  
 And suppliant stands, invoking ev'ry pow'r 470  
 To speed Ulysses to his native shore.  
 A knotty stake then aiming at his head,  
 Down dropp'd he groaning, and the spirit fled.  
 The scorching flames climb round on ev'ry side :  
 Then the sing'd members they with skill divide ; 475  
 On these, in rolls of fat involv'd with art,  
 The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.  
 Some in the flames, bestrew'd with flour, they threw :  
 Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew :

**B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 31**

These while on sev'ral tables they dispose, 480

As priest himself the blameless rustic rose;

Expert the destin'd victim to dispart

In sev'n just portions, pure of hand and heart.

One sacred to the nymphs apart they lay;

An ther to the winged son of May: 485

The rural tribe in common share the rest,

The king the chine, the honour of the feast,

Who sat delighted at his servant's board;

The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord.

O be thou dear (Ulysses cry'd) to Jove, 490

As well thou claim'st a grateful stranger's love!

Be then thy thanks, (the bounteous swain reply'd),

Enjoyment of the good the Gods provide.

From God's own hand descend our joys and woes;

These he decrees, and he but suffers those: 495

All pow'r is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,

The will itself, omnipotent, fulfills.

This said, the first fruits to the Gods he gave;

Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave:

In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl; 500

He sat, and sweet refection cheer'd his soul.

The bread from canisters Metaulius gave,

(Eumæus' proper treasure bought this slave,

And led from Iaphus, to attend his board,

A servant added to his absent lord). 505

His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,

And from the banquet take the bowls away.

And now the rage of hunger was repress'd,

And each betakes him to his couch to rest.

Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er 510

The face of things; the winds began to roar;

The driving storm the wat'ry west wind pours,

And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.

Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,

Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise; 415

32 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

In mere necessity of coat and cloak,  
With artful preface to his host he spoke.

Hear me, my friends ! who this good banquet grace,  
'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place ;  
And wine can of their wits the wise beguile, 520

Make the sage frolic, and the serious smile,  
The grave in merry measures frisk about,  
And many a long repented word bring out.  
Since to be talkative I now commence,

Let wit cast off the sullen yoke of sense. 525

Once I was strong (would heav'n restore those days !)

And with my betters claim'd my share of praise.

Ulysses, Menelaus led forth a band,

And join'd me with them ('twas their own command) ;

A deathful ambush for the foe to lay, 530

Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way :

There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,

We made the osier fringed bank our bed.

Full soon th' inclemency of heav'n I feel ;

Nor had these shoulders cov'ring, but of steel. 535

Sharp blew the north : snow whit'ning all the fields

Froze with the blast, and gath'ring glaz'd our shields.

There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and vest,

Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest.

Fool that I was ! I left behind my own ;

The skill of weather and of winds unknown,

And trusted to my coat and shield alone !

When now was wasted more than half the night,

And the stars faded at approaching light ;

Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid

Fast by my side, and shiv'ring this I said. 545

Here longer in this field I cannot lie,

The winter pinches, and with cold I die,

And die ashamed (oh wisest of mankind !)

The only fool who left his cloak behind. 550

He thought and answer'd : hardly waking yet,  
Sprung in his mind the momentary wit ;



## B. XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 33

(That wit, which or in council or in fight,  
Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right),  
Hush thee, he cry'd (soft whisp'ring in my ear), 555  
Speak not a word, lest any Greek may hear——

And then (supporting on his arm his head)  
Hear me, companions! (thus aloud he said);  
Methinks too distant from the fleet we lie:

Ev'n now a vision stood before mine eye, 560 }  
And sure the warning vision was from on high:  
Let from among us some swift courier rise,  
Haste to the gen'ral and demand supplies.

Up started Thous straight, Andraemon's son:  
Nimble he arose and cast his garment down; 565  
Instant the racer vanish'd off the ground;  
That instant in his cloak I wrapt me round:  
And safe I slept, till brightly dawning shone  
The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.

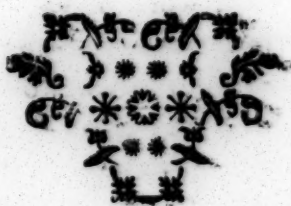
Oh were my strength as then, as then my age! 570  
Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.  
Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then  
The honours and the offices of men;  
Some master, or some servant would allow  
A cloak and vest——but I am nothing now! 575

Well hast thou spoke (rejoin'd th' attentive swain),  
Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain!  
Nor garment shalt thou want, nor aught beside,  
Meet, for the wand'ring suppliant to provide.  
But in the morning take thy cloaths again, 580  
For here one vest suffices ev'ry swain;  
No change of garments to our hinds is known:  
But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son  
With better hand shall grace with fit attires  
His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires. 585

The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,  
And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed;

34 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIV.

The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide  
 He spreads; and adds a mantle thick and wide;  
 With store to heap above him, and below, 590  
 And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.  
 There lay the king, and all the rest supine;  
 All, but the careful master of the swine:  
 Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care;  
 Well arm'd, and fenc'd against nocturnal air; 595  
 His weighty faulchion o'er his shoulder ty'd;  
 His shaggy cloak a mountain-goat supply'd:  
 With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,  
 He seeks his lodging in the rocky den.  
 There to the tusky herd he bends his way, 600  
 Where skreen'd from Boreas, high o'er arch'd they lay.





T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The return of Telemachus.

*The Goddess, Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylus, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the meantime Telemachus arrives on the coast, and sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus.*

NOW had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,  
Fam'd for the dance where Menelaus reigns;  
Anxious she flies to great Ulysses' heir,  
His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.

# 36 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

Beneath the royal portico display'd, 5  
 With Nestor's son, Telemachus was laid:  
 In sleep profound the son of Nestor lies;  
 Not thine, Ulysses! care unseal'd his eyes:  
 Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress'd,  
 And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast. 10  
 When, O Telemachus! (the Goddess said),  
 Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd,  
 Thus leaving careless thy paternal right  
 The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might.  
 On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam, 15  
 Ev'n now the hand of rapine sacks the dome,  
 Hence to Atrides; and his leave implore  
 To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:  
 Fly, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withstands  
 Her kindred's wishes, and her fire's commands; 20  
 Through both, Eurymachus pursues the dame,  
 And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.  
 Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain;  
 Thou know'st the practice of the female train,  
 Lost in the children of the present spouse, 25  
 They slight the pledges of their former vows;  
 Their love is always with the lover past;  
 Still the succeeding flame expels the last.  
 Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,  
 Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride. 30  
 But now thy more attentive ears incline,  
 Observe the warnings of a pow'r divine:  
 For thee their snares the suitor lords shall lay  
 In Samos' sands, or straits of Ithaca;  
 To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band, 35  
 Ere yet thy footsteps press thy native land.  
 No—sooner far their riot and their lust  
 All-cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust!  
 Then distant from the satter'd islands steer,  
 Nor let the night retard thy full career; 40



**B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 37**

Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales  
To smooth thy passage, and supply thy fails:  
And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,  
Send to the town thy vessel with thy friends,  
But seek thou first the master of the swine, 45  
(For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline);  
There pass that night: while he his course pursues  
To bring Penelope the wish'd-for news,  
That thou safe sailing from the Pylian strand,  
Art come to bleis her in thy native land. 50

Thus spoke the Goddeis, and resum'd her flight  
To the pure regions of eternal light.

Meanwhile Pisistratus he gently shakes,  
And with these words the slumb'ring youth awakes:

Rise, son of Nestor! for the road prepare, 55  
And join the harness'd coursers to the car.

What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,  
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?  
Here wait we rather, till approaching day  
Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way. 60  
Nor think of flight before the Spartan king  
Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;  
Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,  
The sacred act of friendship shall record. 64

Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the east,  
The king from Helen rose, and sought his guest.  
As soon as his approach the hero knew,  
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,  
Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,  
Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke. 70

Hail, great Atrides! favour'd of high Jove!  
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.  
Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,  
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows, 75  
Ill, said the king, should I thy wish oppose;

38 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

For oft in others freely I reprove  
 The ill tim'd efforts of officious love ;  
 Who love too much, hate in the like extreme,  
 And both the golden mean alike condemn. 80  
 Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,  
 Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend ;  
 True friendship's law, are by this rule exprest,  
 Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.  
 Yet stay, my friends ! and in your chariot take 85  
 The noblest presents that our love can make :  
 Meantime commit we to our women's care  
 Some choice domestic viands to prepare ;  
 The traveller rising from the banquet gay,  
 Eludes the labours of the tedious way, 90  
 Then if a wider course shall rather please,  
 Through spacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,  
 Atrides in his chariot shall attend,  
 Himself the convoy to each royal friend.  
 No prince will let Ulysses' heir remove 95  
 Without some pledge, some monument of love :  
 These will the caldron, these the tripod give,  
 From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive, }  
 Or bowl emboss'd, whole golden figures live.  
 To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd :  
 O monarch, care of heav'n ! thy people's pride ! 101  
 No friend in Ithaca my place supplies,  
 No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes :  
 My stores expos'd, and fenceless house demand  
 The speediest succour from my guardian hand ; 105  
 Lest, in a search too anxious and too vain  
 Of one joy lost, I lose what yet remain.  
 His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,  
 He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.  
 Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home, 110  
 Was Boethides Eteonus come ;

**B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY: 39:**

Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,  
And o'er the coals the smoking fragment lays.  
Meantime the king, his son, and Helen, went  
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent. 115  
The king selected from the glitt'ring rows  
A bowl; the prince a silver beaker chose.  
The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes  
Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,  
And chose the largest; with no vulgar art 120  
Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part.  
Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,  
Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.  
Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,  
And thus the king Ulysses' heir address. 125

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring Jove  
With happiest omens thy desires approve!  
This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine  
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;  
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame, 130  
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;  
To thee we now consign the precious load,  
The pride of kings, and labour of a God.

Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought  
The silver vase with living sculpture wrought. 135  
The beauteous queen, advancing next, display'd  
The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,  
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:  
Sate in thy mother's care the vesture lay, 140  
To deck thy bride, and grace thy nuptial day.  
Meantime mayst thou with happiest speed regain  
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.

She said, and gave the veil: with grateful look  
The prince the variegated present took. 145  
And now, when through the royal dome they pass'd,  
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.

40 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

A golden ew'r th' attendant damsel brings,  
 Replete with water from the crystal springs;  
 With copious streams the shining vase supplies 150  
 A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash. The tables in fair order spread,  
 The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;  
 Viands of various kinds allure the taste,  
 Of choicest sort and flavour, rich repast! 155

Whilst Eteoneus portions out the shares,  
 Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.  
 And now (each fated with the genial feast,  
 And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceast)  
 Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend, 160

The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.  
 Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,  
 And the wide portal echoes to the sound.

The king precedes: a bowl with fragrant wine  
 (Libation destin'd to the pow'rs divine) 165

His right hand held: before the steeds he stands,  
 Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands.

Farewel and prosper, youths! Let Nestor know  
 What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,  
 For all the proofs of his paternal care, 170

Through the long dangers of the ten years' war.  
 Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)  
 Of all the virtues of thy gen'rous mind.

And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!  
 To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat: 175

How will each speech his grateful wonder raise?  
 How will each gift indulge us in thy praise?

Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right  
 Advanc'd the bird of Jove: auspicious sight!

A milk white fowl his clinching talons bore, 180  
 With care domestic pamper'd at the floor.

Peasants in vain with threat'ning cries pursue;  
 In solemn speed the bird majestic flew



## B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 41

Full dexter to the car : the prosp'rous sight  
Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight. 185

But Nestor's son the cheerful silence broke,  
And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke  
Say if to us the Gods these omens send,  
Or fates peculiar to thyself portend ? 189

Whilst yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppress'd,  
The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the Gods have giv'n  
To read this sign, and mystic sense of heav'n.

As thus the plummy sov'reign of the air  
Lest on the mountain's brow his callow care, 195

And wander'd through the wide æthereal way,  
To pour his wrath on yon luxurious prey ;  
So shall thy godlike father, tofs'd in vain  
Through all the dangers of the boundless main,  
Arrive, (or is perchance already come), 200  
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dôme.

Oh ! if this promis'd bliss by thund'ring Jove  
(The prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above ;  
To thee, as to some God, I'll temples raise,  
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze. 205

He said ; and bending o'er his chariot, flung  
Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong :  
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,  
Till night descending intercepts the way.  
To Diocles, at Pheræ they repair, 210

Whose boasted sire was sacred Alpheus' heir ;  
With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,  
Nor found the hospitable rites unpaid.  
But soon as morning from her orient bed  
Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red, 215  
They join'd the steeds, and on the chariot sprung ;  
The brazen portals in their passage rung.

To Pylos soon they came ; when thus begun  
To Nestor's heir Ulysses' godlike son :

42 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

Let not Pisistratus in vain be prest, 220

Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request;

His friend by long hereditary claim,

In toils his equal, and in years the same.

No farther from our vessel, I implore,

The coursers drive; but lash them to the shore. 225

Too long thy father would his friend detain;

I dread his proffer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.

The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this request,

While love and duty warr'd within his breast:

At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand, 230

And lash'd his panting coursers to the strand.

There, while within the poop with care he stor'd

The regal presents of the Spartan lord;

With speed begone, (said he), call ev'ry mate,

Ere yet to Nestor I the tale relate: 235

'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart

Brooks no repulse, nor couldst thou soon depart:

Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,

In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.

But when arriv'd he thy return shall know, 240

How will his breast with honest fury glow?

This said, the sounding strokes his horses fire,

And soon he reach'd the palace of his fire.

Now (cry'd Telemachus), with speedy care

Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare. 245

Swift as the word his willing mates obey.

And seize their seats, impatient for the sea:

Meantime the prince with sacrifice adores

Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;

When lo! a wretch ran breathless to the shore, 250

New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.

A seer he was, from great Melampus sprung,

Melampus, who in Pylos flourish'd long,

Till, urg'd by wrongs, a foreign realm he chose,

Far from the hateful cause of all his woes. 255

## B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 43

Neleus his treasures one long year detains; 260

As long he groan'd in Phylacus's chains:

Meantime, what anguish and what rage combin'd,

For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind!

Yet 'scap'd he death; and, vengeful of his wrong,

To Pylos drove the lowing herds along: 265

Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the fair

To Bias' arms) he sought a foreign air:

Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,

There form'd his empire, there his palace rose. 270

From him Antiphates and Mantius came:

The first begot Oiclus great in fame,

And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!

The people's saviour and divinely wise,

Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies, 275

Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.

From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love

Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above;

And Polyphides, on whom Phœbus shone

With fullest rays, Amphiaraus now gone; 280

In Hyperëia's groves he made abode,

And taught mankind the counsels of the God.

From him sprung Theoclymenus, who found

(The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)

Telemachus: whom, as to heav'n he prais'd 285

His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd:

O thou that dost thy happy course prepare

With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r!

By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid,

By all the lives of these, thy own dear head, 290

Declare sincerely to no foe's demand,

Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

Prepare then, said Telemachus, to know

A tale from falshood free, not free from wo.

From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came, 295

And great Ulysses (ever honour'd name!)

# 44 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

Was once my fire: though now for ever lost  
In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!  
Whose fate inquiring, through the world we rove;  
The last, the wretched proof of filial love. 300

The stranger then: Nor shall I aught conceal,  
But the dire secret of my fate reveal.  
Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I flew;  
Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue  
With unrelenting rage, and force from home 305

The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.  
But bear, Oh bear me o'er yon azure flood;  
Receive the suppliant! spare my destin'd blood!  
Stranger, (reply'd the prince), securely rest  
Assured in our faith; henceforth our guest. 310

Thus affable, Ulysses' godlike heir  
Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear;  
He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,  
And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.  
The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band 315

With due observance wait the chief's command:  
With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind  
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.  
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey  
With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea. 320

Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,  
When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day:  
The silver Phæa's glitt'ring rills they lost,  
And skimm'd along by Ellis' sacred coast.  
Then cautious through the rocky reaches wind, 325  
And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Meantime the king, Eumæus, and the rest,  
Sat in the cottage, at their rural feast:  
The banquet pass'd, and satiate ev'ry man,  
To try his host Ulysses thus began. 330

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your guest;  
The last I purpose in your walls to rest:



**B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 45**

To-morrow for myself I must provide,  
And only ask your counsel, and a guide :  
Patient to roam the street, by hunger led, 335  
And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.

There in Ulysses' roof I may relate  
Ulysses' wand'rings to his royal mate ;  
Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,  
Not undeserving, some support obtain. 340

Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,  
Patron of industry and manual arts :  
Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,  
The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend ;  
To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ; 345

Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.  
Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,  
Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

Alas ! (Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd),  
How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind ? 350  
If on that godless race thou wouldst attend,  
Fate owes thee sure a miserable end !

Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,  
And pull descending vengeance from on high.  
Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast : 355

A blooming train in rich embroidery drest,  
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,  
And smiling round celestial youth attends.  
Stay then : no eye askance beholds thee here ;  
Sweet is thy converse to each social ear ; 360

Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,  
Till good Telemachus accepts his guest  
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,  
And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

To him the man of woes : O gracious Jove ! 365  
Reward this stranger's hospitable love,  
Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,  
Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.

46 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,  
 A life of wand'rings is the greatest wo: 370  
 On all their weary ways wait care and pain,  
 And pine and penury, a meagre train.  
 To such a man since harbour you afford,  
 Relate the farther fortunes of your lord;  
 What cares his mother's tender breast engage, 375  
 And fire, forsaken on the verge of age;  
 Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,  
 Or range the houte of darknefs and of death?  
 To whom the twain: Attend what you inquire.  
 Laertes lives, the miserable fire, 380  
 Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay  
 The burden down, and wishes for the day.  
 Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,  
 Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,  
 Sole, and all comfortless, he wastes away 385  
 Old age, untimely posting ere his day.  
 She too, sad mother! for U yll's lost,  
 Pin'd out her bloom, and van'ish'd to a ghost.  
 (So dire a fate, ye righteous Gods avert,  
 From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!) 390  
 While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,  
 Her pleasing converse minister'd relief:  
 With Climene, her youngest daughter, bred,  
 One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.  
 But when the softly-stealing pace of time 395  
 Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,  
 To Samos' isle she sent the wedded fair;  
 Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;  
 Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,  
 Nor less the darling object of her love. 400  
 Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercaft,  
 Yet providence deserts me not at last;  
 My present labours food and drink procure,  
 And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.

## **B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 47**

Small is the comfort from the queen to hear, 405  
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;  
Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,  
Nor dare to question where the proud command:  
No profit springs beneath usurping powers;  
Want feeds not there, where luxury devours, 410  
Nor harbours charity where riot reigns:  
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.

The suff'ring chief at this began to melt;  
And, oh Eumæus! thou (he cries) hast felt  
The spite of fortune too! her cruel hand 415  
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!  
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,  
To early wants! a man of miseries!  
Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare:  
Sunk the fair city by the rage of war, 420  
Where once thy parents dwelt? or did they keep,  
In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep?  
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,  
Rude pirates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main.  
Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board, 425  
The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,  
A story fruitful of events, attend:  
Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,  
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ. 430  
Long nights the now declining year bestows;  
A part we consecrate to soft repose,  
A part in pleasing talk we entertain;  
For too much rest itself becomes a pain.  
Let those whom sleep invites, the call obey, 435  
Their cares resuming with the dawning day:  
Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd  
Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind;  
Review the series of our lives, and taste  
The melancholy joy of evils past: 440

48 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B XV.

For he who much has suffer'd, much will know;  
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on wo.

Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame,  
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name;  
(I here curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace 445  
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race);  
Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grafs to keep  
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep;  
Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,  
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn. 450  
No want, no famine the glad natives know,  
Nor sink by sickness to the shades below;  
But when a length of years unnerves the strong,  
Apollo comes, and Cynthia come along.  
They bend the silver bow with tender skill, 455  
And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.  
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,  
Where two fair cities rise with equal pride.  
But both in constant peace one prince obey,  
And Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway. 460  
Freighted, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort  
A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port;  
What time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,  
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.  
This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician train, 465  
To wash her robes descending to the main,  
A smooth tongu'd sailor won her to his mind;  
(For love deceives the best of woman-kind).  
A sudden trust from sudden liking grew;  
She told her name, her race, and all she knew. 470  
I too (she cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,  
My father Arybas, of wealthy fame;  
But snatch'd by pirates from my native place,  
The Taphians sold me to this man's embrace.  
Haste then (the false designing youth reply'd), 475  
Haste to thy country; love shall be thy guide:



# B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 49

Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,  
For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

"Swear first (she cry'd), ye sailors! to restore  
"A wretch in safety to her native shore." 480 }

Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore.

She then proceeds: Now let our compact made

Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,

Nor near me any of your crew descry'd

By road frequented, or by fountain side. 485

Be silence still our guard. The monarch's spies

(For watchful age is ready to surmise)

Are still at hand; and this, reveal'd, must be

Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.

Your vessel loaded, and your traffic past, 490

Dispatch a wary messenger with haste:

Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,

And more, the infant offspring of the king.

Him, child like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,

(A noble prize!), and to your ship convey. 495

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road.

A year they traffic, and their vessel load.

Their stores complete, and ready now to weigh,

A spy was sent their summons to convey:

An artist to my father's palace came, 500

With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame:

Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,

They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.

He took th' occasion as they stood intent,

Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went. 505

She straight pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm;

I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.

Three golden goblets in the porch she found,

(The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd);

Hid in her fraudulent bosom, these she bore. 510

Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.

50 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B.XV.

Arriving then, where tilting on the tides  
 Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides ;  
 Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep  
 With level oar along the glassy deep. 515  
 Six calm days and six smooth nights we sail,  
 And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.  
 The seventh, the fraudulent wretch, (no cause describ'd),  
 Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow, dy'd.  
 Down dropt the caitiff corse, a worthless load, 520  
 Down to the deep ; there roll'd, the future food  
 Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood. }  
 An hapless infant, I remain'd behind ;  
 Thence born to Ithaca by wave and wind ;  
 Sold to Laertes, by divine command, 525  
 And now adopted to a foreign land.

To him the king : Reciting thus thy cares,  
 My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares :  
 But one choice blessing (such is Jove's high will)  
 Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill : 530  
 Torn from thy country to no hapless end,  
 The Gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.  
 Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,  
 (For she needs little), daily bread and wine.  
 While I, so many wand'rings past and woes, 535  
 Live but on what thy poverty bestows.

So pass'd in pleasing dialogue away  
 The night ; then down to short repose they lay ; }  
 Till radiant rose the messenger of day. }  
 While in the port of Ithaca, the band 540  
 Of young Telemachus approach'd the land ;  
 Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,  
 And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd :  
 Then on the breezy shore descending, join  
 In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine. 545  
 When thus the prince : Now each his course pursue ;  
 I to the fields, and to the city you.

## B. XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 51

Long absent hence, I dedicate this day  
My swains to visit, and the works survey.  
Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies 550  
Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.

Then Theoclymenus: But who shall lend,  
Meantime, protection to thy stranger friend?  
Straight to the queen and palace shall I fly,  
Or yet more distant, to some lord apply? 555

The prince return'd: Renown'd in days of yore  
Has stood our father's hospitable door;  
No other roof a stranger should receive,  
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.  
But in my absence riot fills the place, 560  
Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face,  
From noiseful revel far remote she flies,  
But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.  
No—let Eurymachus receive my guest,  
Of nature courteous, and by far the best, 565  
He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,  
And emulates her former husband's fame:  
With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,  
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or wo.

Thus speaking, on the right up soar'd in air 570  
The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger;  
His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;  
The clotted feathers, scatter'd from above,  
Between the hero and the vessel pour  
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r. 575

Th' observing augur took the prince aside,  
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd.  
Yon bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,  
Rose ominous: nor flies without a God:  
No race but thine shall Ithaca obey, 580  
To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the sway.  
Succeed the omen, Gods! (the youth rejoind);  
Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,

52 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XV.

And soon each envy'd happiness attend  
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend. 585

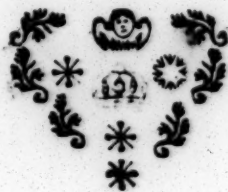
Then to Piræus—Thou whom time has prov'd  
A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd!  
Till we returning shall our guest demand,  
Accept this charge, with honour, at our hand.

To this Piræus: Joyful I obey, 590  
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.  
The presence of thy guest shall best reward  
(If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.

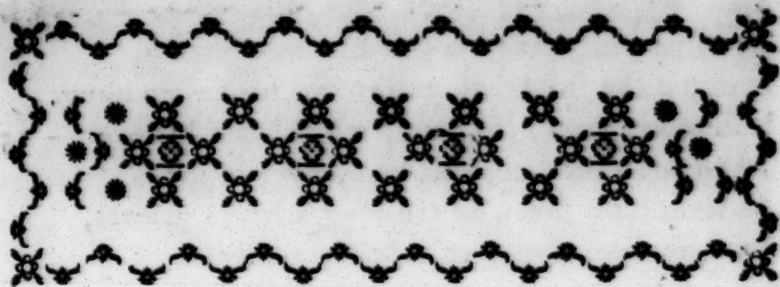
With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,  
Mount the tall bark, and launch into the sea. 595

All with obedient haste forsake the shores,  
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.  
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes;  
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes.

They part; while less'ning from the hero's view, 600  
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew:  
The hero trod the margin of the main,  
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.







T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XVI.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

*Telemachus arriving at the lodge of Eumæus, sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses, commands him to discover himself to his son. The princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.*

Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains,  
Ulysses, and the monarch of the swains,  
Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,  
And forth to pasture send the bristly care.

The prince's near approach the dogs descry,      §  
And fawning round his feet, confess their joy.  
Their gentle blandishment the king survey'd,  
Heard his resounding step, and instant said :

Some well known friend (Eumæus) bends this way:  
His steps I hear ; the dogs familiar play.      10

While yet he spoke, the prince advancing drew  
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.

54 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Transported, from his seat Eumæus sprung,  
 Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung;  
 Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye 15  
 The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.  
 As some fond sire who ten long winters grieves,  
 From foreign climes an only son receives,  
 (Child of his age), with strong paternal joy  
 Forward he springs, and clasps the fav'rite boy: 20  
 So round the youth his arms Eumæus spread,  
 As it the grave had giv'n him from the dead.

And is it thou? my ever dear delight!  
 O art thou come to bless my longing sight!  
 Never, I never hop'd to view this day, 25  
 When o'er the waves you plough'd the desp'rate way.  
 Enter, my child! beyond my hopes restor'd,  
 O give these eyes to feast upon their lord.  
 Enter, oh seldom seen! for lawless pow'rs  
 Too much detain thee from these sylvan bow'rs 30

The prince reply'd: Eumæus I obey;  
 To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.  
 But say, if in the court the queen reside  
 Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride?

Thus he: and thus the monarch of the swains; 35  
 Severely chaste, Penelope remains,  
 But lost to ev'ry joy, she wastes the day  
 In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass  
 The jav'lin, pointed with a star of brass) 40  
 They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble shin'd.  
 His seat Ulysses to the prince resign'd.  
 Not so——(exclaims the prince with decent grace)  
 For me, this house shall find an humbler place:  
 T' usurp the honours due to silver hairs 45  
 And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.  
 Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,  
 And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.

## B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 55

There sat the prince: the feast Eumæus spread;  
And heap'd the shining canisters with bread. 50  
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,  
The frugal remnants of the former day.  
Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,  
Around whose verge a mimic ivy twines.  
And, now the rage of thirst and hunger fled, 55  
Thus young Ulysses to Eumæus said.

Whence, father, from what shore this stranger, say?  
What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?  
To human step our land impervious lies,  
And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise. 60

The swain returns: a tale of sorrows hear;  
In spacious Crete he drew his natal air,  
Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,  
For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.  
Half breathless 'scaping to the land, he flew 65  
From Thesport mariners, a murd'rous crew.  
To thee, my son, the suppliant I resign;  
I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,  
Willing to aid, unable to defend. 70

Can strangers safely in the court reside,  
'Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride?  
Ev'n I unsafe: the queen in doubt to wed,  
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?  
Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame, 75  
Deaf to the mighty Ulyssæan name.

However, stranger! from our grace receive  
Such honours as best a prince to give;  
Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,  
And safe to sail with ornaments of love. 80  
Till then, thy guest amid the rural train  
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.  
'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,  
And clothe the naked from th' incliment sky.

36 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs, 85  
And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.  
For shouldst thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve  
I must behold it, and can only grieve.

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,  
O'erpow'r'd by numbers, is but brave in vain. 90

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,  
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.  
Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue  
At once to pity and resent thy wrong.

My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave 95  
Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.

But tell me, dost thou, prince, dost thou behold  
And hear their midnight-revels uncontroll'd?  
Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,  
Or priests in fabled oracles advise? 100

Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,  
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour?

O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,  
Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung;  
Or, heav'ns! might he return! (and soon appear 105  
He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair);

Might he return, I yield my life a prey  
To my worst foe, if that avenging day  
Be not their last: but should I lose my life  
Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife, 110  
I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath,  
Rather than bear dishonour, worse than death;  
Than see the hand of violence invade

The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid:  
Than see the wealth of kings consum'd in waste, 115  
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast.

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye;  
Sincere the youthful hero made reply.  
Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,  
Nor priests in fabled oracles advise; 120



# B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 57

Nor are my brothers, who should aid my pow'r,  
 Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.  
 Ah me! I boast no brother; heav'n's dread king  
 Gives from our stock an only branch to spring:  
 Alone Laertes reign'd Arcefius' heir, 125  
 Alone Ulysses drew the vital air,  
 And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,  
 An unblest'd offspring of a fire unblest'd!  
 Each neighb'ring realm, conducive to our wo,  
 Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe: 130  
 The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,  
 And lofty Zacynth crown'd with shady hills,  
 Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade  
 Th' imperial sceptre, and the regal bed:  
 The queen averse to love, yet aw'd by pow'r, 135  
 Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:  
 Meantime their licence uncontroll'd I bear;  
 Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:  
 But heav'n will sure revenge, and Gods there are. }  
 But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart 140  
 Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart.  
 Yet secret go; for num'rous are my foes,  
 And here at least I may in peace repose.  
 To whom the swain: I hear, and I obey:  
 But old Laertes weeps his life away, 145  
 And deems thee lost: shall I my speed employ  
 To bless his age, a messenger of joy?  
 The mournful hour that tore his son away,  
 Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray;  
 Yet busied with his slaves, to ease his wo, 150  
 He dress'd the vine, and bade the garden blow,  
 Nor food nor wine refus'd: but since the day  
 That you to Pylos plough'd the wat'ry way,  
 Nor wine nor food he tastes; but sunk in woes,  
 Wild springs the vine, no more the garden blows. 155

# 38 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,  
Pensive and pale, he wanders, half a ghost.

Wretched old man ! (with tears the prince returns).  
Yet cease to go——what man so blest'd but mourns ?  
Were ev'ry wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies, 160  
This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.

But to the queen with speed dispatchful bear  
Our safe return, and back with speed repair :  
And let some handmaid of her train resort  
To good Laertes in his rural court. 165

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay  
He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away.  
Then from the heav'ns the martial goddess flies  
Through the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies ;  
In form, a virgin in soft beauty's bloom, 170  
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

Alone to Ithacus she stood display'd,  
But unapparent as a viewless shade  
Escap'd Telemachus : (the pow'rs above,  
Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move.) 175  
The dogs intelligent confess the tread  
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.  
The Goddess, beck'ning, waves her deathless hands ;  
Dauntless the king before the goddess stands.

Then why, (she said), O favour'd of the skies ! 180  
Why to thy godlike son this long disguise ?  
Stand forth reveal'd : with him thy cares employ  
Against thy foes ; be valiant, and destroy !  
Lo I descend in that avenging hour,  
To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r. 185

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold :  
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold :  
At once with grace divine his frame improves ;  
At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves :  
Youth flush'd his redd'ning cheek, and from his brows  
A length of hair in sable ringlets flows ; 191

## B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 59

His black'ning chin receives a deeper shade:  
Then from his eyes upsprung the warrior-maid.

The hero re-ascends: the prince o'eraw'd  
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God. 295  
Then with surprise (surprise chafis'd by fears),  
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd), a God appears!  
Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace!  
Far other glories lighten from thy face!  
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care 200

Lo! I the ready sacrifice prepare;  
Lo! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy shrine,  
To win thy grace: O save us, pow'r divine!

Few are my days, Ulysses made reply,  
Nor I, alas! descendent of the sky. 205  
I am thy father. O my son, my son!  
That father, for whose sake thy days have run  
One scene of wo; to endless cares consign'd,  
And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.

Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy 210  
With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.  
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:  
He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.  
Ah me! (exclaims the prince with fond desire),  
Thou art not——no, thou canst not be my sire, 215  
Heav'n such illusion only can impose,  
By the false joy to aggravate my woes.  
Who but a God can change the gen'ral doom,  
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?  
Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you trod; 220  
Now, cloth'd in majesty, you move a God!

Forbear, he cry'd; for heav'n reserve that name,  
Give to thy father but a father's claim:  
Other Ulysses shalt thou never see;  
I am Ulysses, I (my son) am he. 225  
Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,  
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

60 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds  
 With grace divine; her pow'r admits no bounds:  
 She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed; 230  
 Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.  
 The Gods with ease frail man depress or raise,  
 Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sat. The prince with transport flew,  
 Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew;  
 Nor less the father pour'd a social flood? 236  
 They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.  
 As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,  
 Or parent vulture, mourns her ravish'd young;  
 They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a prey 240  
 To some rude churl, and borne by stealth away;  
 So they aloud: and tears in tides had run,  
 Their grief unfinish'd with the setting sun:  
 But checking the full torrent in its flow,  
 The prince thus interrupts the solemn wo. 245  
 What ship transported thee, O father, say?  
 And what blest'd hands have oar'd thee on the way?  
 All, all, (Ulysses instant made reply),  
 I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!  
 Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd, 250  
 A nation ever to the stranger kind;  
 Wrapt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train  
 O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign:  
 Embroider'd vestures, gold, and bras are lain  
 Conceal'd in caverns in thy sylvan shade. 255  
 Hither, intent the rival rout to slay,  
 And plan the scene of death, I bend my way:  
 So Pallas wills——But thou, my son, explain  
 The names and numbers of th' audacious train;  
 'Tis mine to judge if better to employ 260  
 Assistant force, or singly to destroy.  
 O'er earth (returns the prince) resounds thy name,  
 Thy well try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame:



## B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 65

Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost;  
Can we engage not decads, but an host? 265  
Can we alone in furious battle stand  
Against that num'rous and determin'd band?  
Hear then their numbers: From Dulichium came  
Twice twenty six, all peers of mighty name;  
Six are their menial train: twice twelve the boast 270  
Of Samos: twenty from Zacynthus coast:  
And twelve our country's pride; to these belong  
Mdon and Phemius skill'd in heav'nly song.  
Two few'rs from day to day the revels wait,  
Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state. 275  
With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,  
Were by false courage unreveng'd to die.  
Then what assistant pow'rs you boast, relate,  
Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate.

Mark well my voice, (Ulysses straight replies): 280  
What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies;  
If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,  
By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove?

Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)  
Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind: 285  
They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,  
Wither the strength of man, and awe the Gods.

Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might  
We rise terrific to the task of fight.  
But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain, 290  
The court revisit and the lawless train:  
Me thither in disguise Eumæus leads,  
An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.  
There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age,  
Bear it, my son! repress thy rising rage. 295  
If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel;  
Bear it, my son! howe'er thy heart rebel.  
Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain  
Their lawless insults, though thou strive in vain:

62 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI

For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call, 300  
 And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd to fall,  
 Once more attend : When \* she whose pow'r inspires  
 The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires,  
 I give the sign ; that instant, from beneath,  
 Aloft convey the instruments of death, 305  
 Armour and arms ; and, if mistrust arise,  
 Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

“ These glitt'ring weapons, ere he sail'd to Troy,  
 “ Ulysses view'd with stern heroic joy ;  
 “ Then beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they shone : 310  
 “ Now dust dishonours, all their lustre gone.  
 “ I bear them hence (so Jove my soul inspires)  
 “ From the pollution of the burning fires ;  
 “ Lest when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood  
 “ Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with blood : 315  
 “ Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite  
 “ The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.”

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive :  
 For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.  
 Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield, 320  
 A pointed jav'lin, and a fenceless shield.  
 But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,  
 By that regard a son his father owes :  
 The secret, that thy father lives, retain  
 Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train ; 325  
 Hide it from all ; ev'n from Eumæus hide,  
 From my dear father, and my dearer bride.  
 One care remains, to note the loyal few  
 Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew ;  
 And noting, ere we rise in vengeance, prove 330  
 Who loves his prince ; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth : To emulate I aim  
 The brave and wise, and my great father's fame.  
 But reconsider, since the wisest err,  
 Vengeance resolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer. 335

\* Minerva.

## **XXVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 63**

What length of time must we consume in vain,  
Too curious to explore the menial train?  
While the proud foes, industrious to destroy  
Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.  
Suffice it in this exigence alone 340

To mark the damsels that attend the throne:  
Dispers'd the youth resides; their faith to prove  
Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from Jove.

While in debate they waste the hours away,  
Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay; 345  
With speed they guide the vessel to the shores;  
With speed debarking land the naval stores;  
Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,  
And trust the presents to his friendly care.  
Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart 350  
Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart;  
Lest a sad prey to ever-musing cares,  
Pale grief destroy what time a while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,  
And cries aloud, Thy son, oh queen, returns. 355  
Eumæus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,  
And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,  
Then measur'd back the way.—The suitor-band  
Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand;  
And issuing from the dome, before the gate, 360  
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sat.

At length Eurymachus: Our hopes are vain;  
Telemachus in triumph sails the main.  
Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display;  
Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey! 365

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand  
Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band;  
Full to the bay within the winding shores  
With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.  
O friends! he cry'd, elate with rising joy, 370  
See to the port secure the vessel fly!

# 64 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Some God has told them, or themselves survey  
The bark escap'd; and measure back their way.

Siwft at the word descending to the shores,  
They moor the vessel and unlade the stores: 375  
Then moving from the strand, apart they fat,  
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy? he lives, (Antinous cries),  
The care of Gods, and fav'rite of the skies.  
All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels 380  
Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills,

And from the lofty brow of rocks by day  
Took in the ocean with a broad survey:  
Yet safe he sails! the pow'rs coelestial give  
To shun the hidden snares of death, and live. 385

But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,  
Be now the scene of instant death decreed;  
Hope ye success? undaunted crush the foe.  
Is he not wise? know this, and strike the blow.  
Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws 390

The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause?  
Strike, ere, the states conven'd, the foe betray  
Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.  
Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly  
Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky? 395

The brave prevent misfortunes; then be brave,  
And bury future danger in his grave.

Returns he? ambush'd we'll his walk invade,  
Or where he hides in solitude and shade:  
And give the palace to the queen a dow'r, 400  
Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.

But if submissive you resign the sway,  
Slaves to a boy; go, flatter and obey.  
Retire we instant to our native reign,  
Nor be the wealth of kings consum'd in vain. 405

Then wed whom choice approves; the queen be giv'n  
To some bless'd prince, the prince decreed by heav'n.



## B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 63

Abash'd, the suitor train his voice attends;  
Till from his throne Amphinomus descends,  
Who o'er Dulichium stretch'd his spacious reign, 410  
A land of plenty, blest'd with ev'ry grain:  
Chief of the numbers who the queen address,  
And though displeasing, yet displeasing least.  
Soft were his words; his actions wisdom sway'd;  
Graceful a while he paus'd, then mildly said. 415

O friends, forbear! and be the thought withstood:  
'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood!  
Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,  
And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.  
If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies; 420  
If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said: the rival train his voice approv'd,  
And rising instant to the palace mov'd.  
Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they sat,  
Recumbent on the shining thrones of state. 425

Then Medon, conscious of their dire debates,  
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.  
Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends:  
Her hasty steps a damsel train attends.  
Full where the dome its shining valves expands, 430  
Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands:  
And veiling decent with a modest shade  
Her cheek, indignant to Antinous said:

O void of faith! of all bad men the worst!  
Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accurst! 435  
Mistaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind!  
Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.  
Wretch! to destroy a prince that friendship gives,  
While in his guest his murd'rer he receives:  
Nor dread superior Jove, to whom belong 440  
The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong.  
Hast thou forgot, (ungrateful as thou art),  
Who sav'd thy father with a friendly part?

66 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI.

Lawless; he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs  
The Taphian pirates on Thesprotia's shores; 445

Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand;

Ulysses sav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

And wouldst thou evil for his good repay?

His bed dishonour, and his house betray?

Afflict his queen? and with a murd'rous hand 450

Destroy his heir? —but cease, 'tis I command.

Far hence those fears, (Eurymachus reply'd),

O prudent princess! bid thy soul confide.

Breathes there a man who dares that hero slay,

While I behold the golden light of day? 555

No: by the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I swear,

His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.

Ulysses, when my infant days I led,

With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed:

My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part, 460

And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.

Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n destroy,

We must resign; for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd:

Then sorrowing, with sad step the queen retir'd, 465

With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor'd,

Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord;

Nor ceas'd, till Pallas bid her sorrows fly,

And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning hour, 470

Came late returning to his sylvan bow'r.

Ulysses and his son had dress'd with art

A yearling boar, and gave the Gods their part,

Holy repast! That instant from the skies

The martial Goddess to Ulysses flies: 475

She waves her golden wand, and re-assumes

From ev'ry feature ev'ry grace that blooms;

At once his vestures change: at once she sheds

Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads;

## B. XVI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY 67

Left to the queen the swain with transport fly, 480  
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.

When near he drew, the prince breaks forth ; Proclaim  
What tidings, friend ! what speaks the voice of fame ?

Say, if the suitors measure back the main,  
Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain ? 485

Whether (he cries) they measure back the flood,  
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,

Escap'd my care : where lawless suitors sway,  
Thy mandate borne, my soul disdain'd to stay.

But from th' Hermæan height I cast a view, 490  
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew :

Her freight a shining band ; with martial air  
Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his spear :

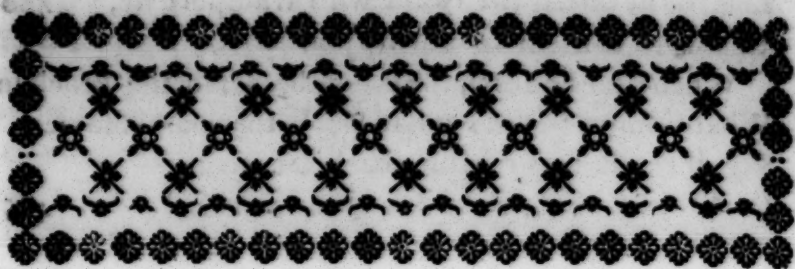
And if aright these searching eyes survey,  
Th' eluded suitors stem the wat'ry way. 495

The prince, well pleas'd to disappoint their wiles,  
Steals on his fire a glance, and secret smiles.

And now a short repast prepar'd, they fed,  
Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled :

Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay, 500  
And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.





T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K   XVII.

T H E   A R G U M E N T.

*Telemachus, returning to the city, relates to Penelope the sum of his travels. Ulysses is conducted by Eumæus to the palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulysses remains among the suitors, whose behaviour is described.*

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,  
Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn;  
In haste the prince arose, prepar'd to part;  
His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart;  
Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine,  
And thus he greets the master of the swine.

5

My friend, adieu: let this short stay suffice;  
I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes,  
And end her tears, her sorrows, and her sighs.  
But thou attentive, what we order heed;  
This hapless stranger to the city lead;

10



# B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 69

By public bounty let him there be fed,  
 And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.  
 To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,  
 My will may covet, but my pow'r denies. 15  
 If this raise anger in the stranger's thought,  
 The pain of anger punishes the fault :  
 The very truth I undisguis'd declare ;  
 For what so easy as to be sincere ?

To this Ulysses : What the prince requires 20  
 Of swift removal, seconds my desires.  
 To want like mine, the peopled town can yield  
 More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.  
 Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,  
 Or stoop to tasks a rural lord demands. 25  
 Adieu ! but since this ragged garb can bear  
 So ill th' inclemencies of morning air,  
 A few hours space permit me here to stay ;  
 My steps Eumæus shall to town convey,  
 With riper beams when Phœbus warms the day. 30

Thus he : nor aught Telemachus reply'd,  
 But left the mansion with a lofty stride.  
 Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,  
 Revolving deep the suitors sudden fate.  
 Arriving now before the imperial hall, 35  
 He props his spear against the pillar'd wall ;  
 Then like a lion o'er the threshold bounds ;  
 The marble pavement with his step resounds :  
 His eye first glanc'd where Euryclea spreads  
 With hurry spoils of beasts the splendid beds : 40  
 She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,  
 And reach'd her master with a long embrace.  
 All crouded round, the family appears,  
 With wild entrancement, and ecstatic tears.  
 Swift from above descends the royal fair ; 45  
 (Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,  
 Chastened with coy Diana's pensive air) ;

70 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVI

Hangs o'er her son ; in his embraces dies ;  
 Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes.  
 Few words she spoke, though much she had to say, 50  
 And scarce these few, for tears, could force their way.

Light of my eyes ! he comes ! unhop'd-for joy !  
 Has heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy ?  
 So snatch'd from all our cares !— Tell, hast thou known  
 Thy father's fate ? and tell me all thy own. 55

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind !  
 Cease with thote tears to melt a manly mind,  
 (Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,  
 From death and treason to thy arms restor'd.  
 Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs : 60  
 With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal pow'rs ;  
 To ev'ry God vow hecatombs to bleed,  
 And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed :  
 While to th' assembled council I repair ;  
 A stranger sent by heav'n attends me there ; 65  
 My new accepted guest I haste to find,  
 Now to Piræus' honour'd charge consign'd.

The matron heard : nor was his word in vain :  
 She bath'd : and rob'd in white, with all her train,  
 To ev'ry God vow'd hecatombs to bleed, 70  
 And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.  
 Arm'd with his lance the prince then pass'd the gate ;  
 Two dogs, behind, a faithful guard, await :  
 Pallas his form with grace divine improves :  
 The gazing croud admires him as he moves. 75  
 Him, gath'ring round, the haughty suitors greet  
 With semblance fair, but inward deep deceit.  
 Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,  
 Pass'd on, and sat by faithful Mentor's side ;  
 With Antiphus, and Halitherses sage, 80  
 (His father's counsellors, rever'd for age).  
 Of his own fortunes, and Ulysses' fame  
 Much ask'd the seniors ; till Piræus came.

## B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 71

The stranger-guest pursu'd him close behind;  
Whom when Telemachus beheld, he join'd. 85  
He (when Piræus ask'd for Ques to bring  
The gifts and treasures of the Spartan king)  
Thus thoughtful answer'd: Those we shall not move,  
Dark and unconscious of the will of Jove:  
We know not yet the full event of all: 90  
Stabb'd in his palace if your prince must fall,  
Us and our house if treason must o'erthrow,  
Better a friend possess them than a foe:  
If death to these, and vengeance heav'n decree,  
Riches are welcome then, not else, to me. 95  
Till then, retain the gifts — the hero said,  
And in his hand the willing stranger led.  
Then disarray'd the shining bath they sought,  
(With unguents smooth) of polish'd marble wrought;  
Obedient handmaids with assisting toil 100  
Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil:  
Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,  
And fresh from bathing to their seats withdrew.  
The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,  
Replenish'd from the pure translucent springs; 105  
With copious streams that golden ew'r supplies  
A silver laver of capacious size.  
They wash: the table in fair order spread,  
Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.  
Full opposite, before the folding gate, 110  
The penfive mother sits in humble state;  
Lowly the sat, and with dejected view  
The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.  
The prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,  
Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceas'd. 115  
When thus the queen: My son! my only friend!  
Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend?  
(The couch deserted now a length of years,  
The couch for ever water'd with my tears,

72 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

Say, wilt thou not (ere yet the suitor crew      120  
Return, and riot shakes our walls anew),  
Say, wilt thou not the least account afford,  
The least glad tidings of my absent lord?

To her the youth: We reach'd the Pylian plains,  
Where Nestor, shepherd of his people, reigns.      125  
All arts of tenderness to him are known,  
Kind to Ulysses' race as to his own;  
No father, with a fonder grasp of joy,  
Strains to his bosom his long-absent boy.  
But all unknown, if yet Ulysses breathe,      130  
Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath.  
For further search, his rapid steeds transport  
My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.  
There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms  
(So heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.      135  
My cause of coming told, he thus rejoin'd;  
And still his words live perfect in my mind.

Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train  
An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!  
So with her young, amid the woodland shades,      140  
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,  
Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,  
And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;  
Meantime returning, with remorseless sway  
The monarch savage rends the panting prey:      145  
With equal fury, and with equal fame,  
Shall great Ulysses reassert his claim.  
O Jove! supreme! whom men and Gods revere!  
And thou whose lustre gilds the rolling sphere!  
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid      150  
The chief adopted by the martial maid!  
Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,  
As when, contending on the Lesbian shore,  
His prowess Philomelides confess'd,  
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bless'd:      155



## B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 73

Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne  
Their love presumptuous shall by death atone.  
Now what ye question of my ancient friend,  
With truth I answer; thou the truth attend.  
Learn what I heard the \* sea-born teer relate, 160  
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.  
Sole in an isle, imprison'd by the main,  
The sad survivor of his num'rous train,  
Ulysses lies; detain'd by magic charms,  
And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms. 165  
No sailors there, no vessels to convey,  
Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way——  
This told Atrides, and he told no more.  
Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.

He ceas'd; nor made the pensive queen reply, 170  
But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh.

When Theoclymenus the seer began:  
Oh suff'ring consort of the suff'ring man!  
What human knowledge could, those kings might tell;  
But I the secrets of high heav'n reveal. 175

Before the first of Gods be this declar'd,  
Before the board whose blessings we have shar'd;  
Witness the genial rites, and witness all  
This house holds sacred in her ample wall?  
Ev'n now this instant great Ulysses laid 180  
At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade,  
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view,  
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.  
Of this sure auguries the Gods bestow'd,

When first our vessel anchor'd in your road. 185

Succeed those omens, heav'n! (the queen rejoin'd),  
So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind;  
And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend  
The man that calls Penelope his friend.

\* Proteus.

# 74 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

Thus commun'd they : while in the marble court  
(Scene of their insolence) the lords resort; 191  
Athwart the spacious square each tries his art  
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive :  
And from the field the victim flocks they drive : 195  
Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best,  
And honour'd with a portion of their feast)  
To bid the banquet, interrupts their play.  
Swift to the hall they haste; aside they lay  
Their garments, and succinct, the victims slay. 200  
Then sheep, and goats, and bristly porkers bled,  
And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide ;  
Along the road conversing side by side,  
Proceed Ulysses and the faithful swain : 205  
When thus Eumæus, gen'rous and humane.

To town, observant of our lord's behest,  
Now let us speed; my friend, no more my guest !  
Yet like myself I wish'd thee here preferr'd,  
Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd. 210  
But much to raise my master's wrath I fear;  
The wrath of princes ever is severe.

Then heed his will, and be our journey made  
While the broad beams of Phœbus are display'd,  
Or ere brown ev'ning spreads the chilly shade. 215

Just thy advice (the prudent chief rejoin'd),  
And such as suits the dictate of my mind.

Lead on: but help me to some staff to stay  
My feeble step, since rugged is the way.

Across his shoulders then the scrip he flung, 220  
Wide patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong :  
A staff Eumæus gave. Along the way  
Cheerly they fare: behind, the keepers stay ;  
These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)  
Supply his absence, and attend the herd. 225

## B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 75

And now his city strikes the monarch's eyes,  
Alas, how chang'd! a man of miseries!  
Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,  
In rags dishonest, flutt'ring with the air!  
Now pass'd the rugged road, they journey down 230  
The cavern'd way descending to the town.

Where, from the rock, with liquid lapie distills  
A limpid fount, that, spread in parting rills,  
Its current thence to serve the city brings;  
An useful work! adorn'd by ancient kings. 235  
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there

In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,  
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,  
And shaded with a green surrounding grove;  
Where silver alders, in high arches twin'd, 240  
Drink the cool stream, and tremble to the wind.  
Beneath, sequester'd to the nymphs, is seen  
A mossy altar, deep embow'r'd in green;  
Where constant vows by travellers are paid,  
And holy horrors solemnize the shade. 245

Here with his goats (not vow'd to sacred flame,  
But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came;  
Two grooms attend him. With an envious look  
He eyed the stranger, and imperious spoke.

The good old proverb how this pair fulfil! 250  
One rogue is usher to another still.

Heav'n with a secret principle endu'd  
Mankind to seek their own similitude.

Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd guest?  
That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast? 255

Full many a post have those broad shoulders worn,  
From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn;

To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,  
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

To beg, than work, he better understands; 260  
Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.

## 76 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

For any office could the slave be good,  
 To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food;  
 If any labour those big joints could learn,  
 Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn. 265  
 To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,  
 Is all by which that graceless maw is fed.

Yet hear me! if thy impudence but dare  
 Approach yon walls, I prophesy thy fare:  
 Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread, 270  
 With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus: nor insolent of word alone,  
 Spurn'd with his rustic heel his king unknown;  
 Spurn'd, but not mov'd: he like a pillar stood,  
 Nor stirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road: 275  
 Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead,  
 Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.  
 Short was the doubt; to quell his rage inur'd,  
 The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.

But hateful of the wretch, Eumæus heav'd 280  
 His hands obtesting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.  
 Daughters of Jove! who from th' æthereal bow'rs  
 Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'rs!  
 Nymphs of this fountain! to whose sacred names  
 Our rural victims mount in blazing flames! 285

To whom Ulysses' piety preferr'd  
 The yearly firstlings of his flock and herd;  
 Succeed my wish; your votary restore:  
 Oh be some God his convoy to our shore!  
 Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence, 290  
 And humble all his airs of insolence,  
 Who, proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,  
 Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What mutters he (Melanthius sharp rejoins),  
 This crafty miscreant big with dark designs? 295  
 The day shall come, nay 'tis already near,  
 When, slave! to sell thee at a price too dear,



## **XXVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 77**

Must be my care ; and hence transport thee o'er,  
(A load and scandal to this happy shore.)

On! that as surely great Apollo's dart, 300  
Or some brave suitor's sword; might pierce the heart  
Of the proud son, as that we stand this hour  
In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

So spoke the wretch ; but shunning farther fray;  
Turn'd his proud step, and left them on their way. 305  
Straight to the feastful palace he repair'd,  
Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd ;  
Beneath Eurymachus, his patron-lord,  
He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.

Meantime they heard, soft circling in the sky, 310  
Sweet airs ascend, and heav'nly minstrelsy ;  
(For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the strain :)  
Ulysses hearken'd, then address'd the swain.

Well may this palace admiration claim,  
Great, and respondent to the master's fame! 315  
Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,  
Holds the chief honours, and the town commands ;  
High walls and battlements the courts inclose,  
And the strong-gates defy a host of foes.  
Far other cares its dwellers now employ ; 320  
The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy :  
I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,  
And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the lyre.

Then thus Eumæus : Judge we which were best ;  
Amidst yon revellers a sudden guest 325  
Chuse you to mingle, while behind I stay ?  
Or I first ent'ring introduce the way ?  
Wait for a space without, but wait not long ;  
This is the house of violence and wrong :  
Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear ; 330  
For like their lawless lords the servants are.

Just is, oh friend ! thy caution, and address  
(Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breast ;

78 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

The wrongs and injuries of base mankind  
Fresh to my sense, and always in my mind. 335

The bravely patient to no fortune yields;  
On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,  
Storms have I pass'd, and many a stern debate;  
And now in humbler scene submit to fate.

What cannot Want? the best she will expose, 340  
And I am learn'd in all her train of woes;

She fills with navies, hosts, and loud alarms  
The sea, the land, and shakes the world with arms!

Thus near the gates, conferring, as they drew,  
Argus, the dog, his ancient master knew; 345

He, not unconscious of the voice and tread,  
Lifts to the sound his ear, and rears his head.

Bred by Ulysses, nourish'd at his board,  
But ah! not fated long to please his lord!  
To him his swiftness and his strength were vain; 350

The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main.

Till then in ev'ry sylvan chace renown'd,  
With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around;  
With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,  
Or trac'd the mazy lev'ret o'er the lawn. 355

Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,  
Unhous'd, neglected, in the public way;  
And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,  
Obscene with reptiles, took his sordid bed.

He knew his lord; he knew, and strove to meet, 360  
In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet;  
Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes  
Salute his master, and confess his joys.

Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul;  
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole, 365  
Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head, and dry'd  
The drop humane: then thus impassion'd cry'd.

What noble beast in this abandon'd state  
Lies here all helpless at Ulysses' gate?

**B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 79**

His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise; 370

If, as he seems, he was in better days,

Some care his age deserves: or was he priz'd

For worthless beauty! therefore now despis'd?

Such dogs and men there are, mere things of state,

And always cherish'd by their friends, the great. 375

Not Argus so, (Eumæus thus rejoin'd),

But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,

Who never, never shall behold him more!

Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore!

Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold, and young, 380

Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong;

Him no fell savage on the plain withstood,

None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood;

His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,

To wind the vapour in the tainted dew! 385

Such, when Ulysses left his natal coast;

Now years unnerve him, and his lord is lost!

The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,

A sleek and idle race is all their care:

The master gone, the servants what restrains? 390

Or dwells humanity where riot reigns?

Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day

Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

This said, the honest herdsmen strode before:

The musing monarch pauses at the door. 395

The dog, whom fate had granted to behold

His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,

Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies;

So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!

And now Telemachus, the first of all, 400

Observ'd Eumæus ent'ring in the hall;

Distant he saw, across the shady dome;

Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come.

There stood an empty seat, where late was plac'd,

In order due, the steward of the feast, 405



# 80 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII

(Who now was busied carving round the board);  
 Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his lord.  
 Before him instant was the banquet spread,  
 And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.

Next came Ulysses, lowly at the door, 410  
 A figure despicable, old, and poor,

In squalid vests with many a gaping rent,  
 Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.  
 Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,  
 Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight; 415

(Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain);  
 The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain:

These viands, and this bread, Eumæus! bear,  
 And let yon medicant our plenty share:  
 Then let him circle round the suitors' board, 420  
 And try the bounty of each gracious lord.  
 Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me;  
 How ill, alas! do want and shame agree?

His lord's command the faithful servant bears;  
 The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs. 425  
 Bless'd be Telemachus! in ev'ry deed.

Inspire him, Jove! in ev'ry wish succeed!  
 This said, the portion from his son convey'd  
 With smiles receiving, on his scrip he laid.  
 Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire, 430  
 He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.

Soon as the suitors from the banquet rose,  
 Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes  
 To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art,  
 And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart; 435

(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,  
 Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train);  
 With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound,  
 Humble he moves, imploring all around.

The proud feel pity, and relief bestow, 440  
 With such an image touch'd of human wo;



**B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 81**

Inquiring all, their wonder they confess,  
And eye the man, majestic in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their eyes,  
The bold Melanthius to their thought replies. 445  
My lords ! this stranger of gigantic port  
The good Eumæus usher'd to your court.  
Full well I mark'd the features of his face,  
Though all unknown his clime, or noble race.

And is this present, swineherd ! of thy hand ? 450  
Bring'st thou these vagrants to infest the land ?  
(Returns Antinous with retorted eye) ;  
Objects uncouth, to check the genial joy.  
Enough of these our court already grace,  
Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face. 455  
Such guests Eumæus to his country brings,  
To share our feast, and lead the life of kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoin'd :  
Thy passion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.  
Who calls, from distant nations to his own, 460  
The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone ?  
Round the wide world are sought those men divine  
Who public structures raise, or who design ;  
Those to whose eyes the Gods their ways reveal,  
Or bless with salutary arts to heal ; 465  
But chief to poets such respect belongs,  
By rival nations courted for their songs ;  
These states invite, and mighty kings admire,  
Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.  
It is not so with want ! how few that feed 470  
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need ?  
Unjust to me and all that serve the state,  
To love Ulysses is to raise thy hate.  
For me suffice the approbation won  
Of my great mistress, and her godlike son. 475

To him Telemachus : No more incense  
The man by nature prone to insolence :

# 82 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B: XVII.

Injurious minds just answers but provoke——

Then turning to Antinous, thus he spoke.

Thanks to thy care! whose absolute command 480

Thus drives the stranger from our court and land.

Heav'n bless its owner with a better mind!

From envy free, to charity inclin'd.

This both Penelope and I afford: \

Then, prince! be bounteous of Ulysses' board. 485

To give another's is thy hand so slow?

So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow?

Whence, great Telemachus! this lofty strain?

(Antinous cries with insolent disdain).

Portions like mine if ev'ry suitor gave, 490

Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the slave.

He spoke, and lifting high above the board

His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.

The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread;

He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped; 495 }

But first before Antinous stopt, and said:

Bestow, my friend! thou dost not seem the worst

Of all the Greeks, but prince-like and the first;

Then as in dignity, be first in worth,

And I shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth. 500

Once I enjoy'd in luxury of state

Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great;

Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days;

And hospitality was then my praise;

In ev'ry sorrowing soul I pour'd delight, 505

And poverty stood smiling in my sight.

But Jove, all governing, whose only will

Determines fate, and mingles good with ill,

Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)

With roving pirates o'er th' Ægyptian main. 510

By Ægypt's silver flood our ships we moor;

Our spies commission'd straight the coast explore,

## B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 83

But impotent of mind, with lawless will  
The country ravage, and the natives kill,  
The spreading clamour to their city flies, 515  
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise:  
The redd'ning dawn reveals the hostile fields  
Horrid with bristly spears, and gleaming shields:  
Jove thunder'd on their side; our guilty head 519  
We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread }  
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.  
Some few the foes in servitude detain;  
Death ill exchang'd for bondage and for pain!  
Unhappy me a Cyprian took aboard,  
And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord: 525  
Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer,  
Still curs'd by fortune, and insulted here!

To whom Antinous thus his rage express'd.  
What God has plagu'd us with this gormand guest?  
Unless at distance, wretch! thou keep behind, 530  
Another isle, than Cyprus more unkind;  
Another Ægypt, shalt thou quickly find. }  
From all thou begg'st, a bold audacious slave;  
Nor all can give so much as thou canst crave.  
Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown; 535  
Shameless they give who give what's not their own.

The chief, retiring: Souls, like that in thee,  
Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.  
Nor will that hand to utmost need afford  
The smallest portion of a wasteful board, 540  
Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,  
Yet starving want, amidst the riot, weeps.

The haughty suitor with resentment burns,  
And sourly smiling, this reply returns  
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng: 545  
And dumb for ever be thy stand'rous tongue! }  
He said, and high the whirling tripod flung.  
His shoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle shock;  
He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock;



# 84 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

But shook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd, 550  
Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,  
And inly form'd revenge : then back withdrew ;  
Before his feet the well fill'd scrip he threw,  
And thus with semblance mild address'd the crew. }

May what I speak your princely minds approve, 555  
Ye peers and rivals in this noble love !

Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.  
If, when the sword our country's quarrel draws,  
Or if defending what is justly dear,  
From Mars impartial some broad wound we bear, 560  
The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar. }

But for mere want, how hard to suffer wrong ?

Want brings enough of other ills along !

Yet if injustice never be secure,

If fiends revenge, and Gods assert the poor, 565

Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,

And make the dust Antinous' bridal bed.

Peace, wretch ! and eat thy bread without offence,  
(The suitor cry'd), or force shall drag thee hence,  
Scourge thro' the public street, and cast thee there, 570  
A mangled carcase for the hounds to tear.

His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,

All, ev'n the worst, condemn'd ; and some reprov'd.

Was ever chief for wars like these renown'd ?

Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound, 575

Unblest'd thy hand ! if in this low disguise

Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies ;

They, (curious oft of mortal actions) deign,

In forms like these, to round the earth and main,

Just and unjust recording in their mind, 580

And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

Telemachus, absorpt in thought severe,

Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear ;

But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook ;

While thus his mother to her virgins spoke : 585



**XXVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 85**

"On him and his may the bright God of day  
"That base, inhospitable blow repay!"

The nurse replies:—"If Jove receives my pray'r,  
"Not one survives to breathe to-morrow's air."

All, all are foes, and mischief is their end; 590

Antinous most to gloomy death a friend,  
(Replies the queen); the stranger begg'd their grace,  
And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face;

From ev'ry other hand redress he found,  
But fell Antinous answer'd with a wound. 595

Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent queen,  
Then bade Eumæus call the pilgrim in.

Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,  
If or his certain eye, or list'ning ear  
Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring lord? 600  
Thus she, and good Eumæus took the word.

A private audience if thy grace impart,  
The stranger's words may ease the royal heart.

His sacred eloquence in balm distils,  
And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills. 605

Three days have spent their beams, three nights have run  
Their silent journey, since his tale begun,  
Unfinish'd yet; and yet I thirst to hear!

As when some heav'n-taught poet charms the ear.  
(Suspending sorrow with celestial strain 610

Breath'd from the Gods to soften human pain),

Time steals away with unregarded wing,  
And the soul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.

Ulysses late he saw, on Cretan ground,  
(His father's guest), for Minos' birth renown'd. 615

He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er,  
With boundless treasure, from Thesprotia's shore.

To this the queen: The wand'rer let me hear,  
While yon luxurious race indulge their cheer,  
Devour the grazing ox and browsing goat, 620  
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat,

# 36 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVII.

For where's an arm, like thine, Ulysses! strong,  
To curb wild riot, and to punish wrong?

She spoke. Telemachus then sneez'd aloud;  
Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the croud. 625

The smiling queen the happy omen blest'd:  
"So may these impious fall, by fate oppress'd!"

Then to Eumæus: Bring the stranger, fly!  
And if my questions meet a true reply,  
Grac'd with a decent robe he shall retire, 630  
A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spoke Penelope. Eumæus flies  
In duteous haste, and to Ulysses cries:  
The queen invites thee, venerable guest!  
A secret instinct moves her troubled breast, 635  
Of her long absent lord from thee to gain  
Some light, and sooth her soul's eternal pain.  
If true, if faithful thou, her grateful mind  
Of decent robes a present has design'd:

So finding favour in the royal eye, 640  
Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)  
My words shall dictate, and my lips shall guide.  
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,  
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n. 645

Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear  
I stand: the hand of violence is here:  
Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,  
And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid.

Let for a space the pensive queen attend, 650  
Nor claim my story till the sun descend;

Then in such robes as suppliants may require,  
Compos'd and cheerful by the genial fire,  
When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,  
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace. 655

Swift to the queen returns the gentle swain:  
And say, (she cries), does fear or shame, detain

## B. XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 87

The cautious stranger? With the begging kind  
Shame suits but ill. Eumæus thus rejoin'd.

He only asks a more propitious hour, 660  
And shuns (who would not?) wicked men in pow'r;  
At ev'ning mild (meet season to confer)  
By turns to question, and by turns to hear.

Whoever this guest, (the prudent queen replies),  
His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise. 665  
For men like these on earth he shall not find,  
In all the miscreant race of humankind.

Thus she. Eumæus all her words attends,  
And parting, to the suitor-pow'rs descends;  
There seeks Telemachus, and thus apart 670  
In whispers breathes the fondness of his heart.

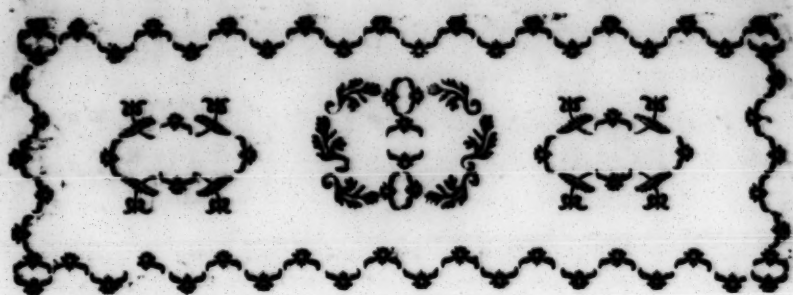
The time, my lord, invites me to repair  
Hence to the lodge; my charge demands my care.  
These sons of murder thirst thy life to take;  
O guard it, guard it, for thy servant's sake! 675

Thanks to my friend, (he cries); but now the hour  
Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r:  
But first refresh: and at the dawn of day  
Hither a victim to the Gods convey.

Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'rs we trust, 680  
Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the just.

Observant of his voice, Eumæus sat  
And fed recumbent on a chair of state.  
Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along  
'Twas riot all amid the suitor-throng, 685  
They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful song.  
Till now declining tow'rd the close of day,  
The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.





T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XVIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The fight of Ulysses and Irus.

*The beggar Irus insults Ulysses: the suitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope descends, and receives the presents of the suitors. The dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.*

**W**Hile fix'd in thought the pensive hero sat,  
A mendicant approach'd the royal gate;  
A surly vagrant of the giant kind,  
The stain of manhood, of a coward mind:  
From feast to feast, insatiate to devour  
He flew, attendant on the genial hour.  
Him on his mother's knees, when babe he lay,  
She nam'd Arnæus on his natal day:  
But Irus his associates call'd the boy,  
Practis'd the common messenger to fly;  
Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.

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}



## **B. XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 89**

From his own roof, with meditated blows,  
He strove to drive the man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence ! and timely speed thy way,  
Lest dragg'd in vengeance, thou repent thy stay ; 15  
See how with nods assent yon princely train !  
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain :  
In peace away ! lest, if persuasions fail,  
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

To whom, with stern regard : O insolence, 20  
Indecently to rail without offence !

What bounty gives, without a rival share ;  
I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air :  
Alike on alms we both precarious live :  
And canst thou envy, when the great relieve ? 25  
Know from the bounteous heav'ns all riches flow,  
And what man gives, the Gods by man bestow :  
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,  
Lest I imprint my vengeance in thy blood ;  
Old as I am should once my fury burn, 30  
How wouldst thou fly, nor even in thought return !

Mere woman-glutton ! (thus the churl reply'd),  
A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide !  
Why cease I, Gods ! to dash those teeth away,  
Like some vile boar's, that greedy of his prey 35  
Uproots the bearded corn ? rise, try the fight,  
Gird well thy loins, approach, and feel my might :  
Sure of defeat, before the peers engage ;  
Unequal fight ! when youth contends with age !

Thus in a wordy war their tongues display 40  
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray :  
Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,  
Thus with loud laughter to the suitor-train.

This happy day in mirth, my friends, employ,  
And lo ! the Gods conspire to crown our joy. 45  
See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,  
Yon surly mendicants contentious stand :

90 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVIII.

Why urge we not to blows ! Well pleas'd they spring  
Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a ring.

To whom Antinous : Lo ! enrich'd with blood, 50  
A kid's well-fatted entrails (tasteful food !)

On glowing embers lie ; on him bestow  
The choicest portion who subdues his foe ;  
Grant him unrival'd in these walls to stay,  
The sole attendant on the genial day. 55

The lords applaud : Ulysses then with art,  
And fears well-feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless heart :

Worn as I am with age, decay'd with wo,  
Say, is it baseness to decline the foe ?  
Hard conflict ! when calamity and age 60

With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, engage !

Yet, fearful of disgrace, to try the day

Imperious hunger bids, and I obey :

But swear, impartial arbiters of right,  
Swear to stand neutral, while we cope in fight. 65

The peers assent : when straight his sacred head  
Telemachus uprais'd, and sternly said.

Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong  
Of this bold insolent, confide, be strong !

The injurious Greek that dare attempt a blow, 70

That instant makes Telemachus his foe ;

And these \* my friends shall guard the sacred ties  
Of hospitality, for they are wise.

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares  
To close in combat, and his body bares ; 75

Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs

By just degrees, like well-turn'd columns, rise :

Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,

And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong,

(Attendant on her chief) : the suitor-croud 80

With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud.

Irus ! alas ! shall Irus be no more !

Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour !

\* Antinous and Eurymachus.

## B. XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 91

Gods ! how his nerves a matchless strength proclaim ;  
Swell o'er his well-strung limbs, and brace his frame !

Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the sight, 86  
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the fight ;  
From his blank visage fled the coward blood,  
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood.

O that such baseness should disgrace the light ! 90  
O hide it, death, in everlasting night !

(Exclaims Antinous), can a vig'rous foe  
Meanly decline to combat age and wo ?  
But hear me, wretch ! if recreant in the fray,  
That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day, 95  
Instant thou fail'st, to Echetus resign'd ;  
A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant-kind,  
Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey  
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke, 100  
In ev'ry joint the trembling Irus shook ;  
Now front to front each frowning champion stands,  
And poises high in air his adverse hands.  
The chief yet doubts, or to the shades below  
To sell the giant at one vengeful blow, 105  
Or save his life ; and soon his life to save  
The king resolves, for mercy sways the brave.  
That instant Irus his huge arm extends,  
Full on his shoulder the rude weight descends :  
The sage Ulysses, fearful to disclose 110  
The hero latent in the man of woes,  
Check'd half his might ; yet rising to the stroke,  
His jaw-bone dash'd ; the crashing jaw-bone broke :  
Down dropp'd he stupid from the stunning wound ;  
His feet extended, quiv'ring, beat the ground ; 115  
His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood ;  
His teeth, all shatter'd, rush immix'd with blood.

The peers, transported, as outstretch'd he lies,  
With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies.



92 HOMER'S ODYSSEY B. XVIII

Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound,  
His length of carcase trailing prints the ground; 121  
Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,  
Till propp'd, reclining on the palace-walls:  
Then to his hand a staff the victor gave,  
And thus with just reproach address'd the slave. 125

There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign  
A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train!  
But mercy to the poor and stranger show,  
Left heav'n in vengeance send some mightier wo.

Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulders flung 130  
The broad patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung  
Ill join'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.

Then, turning short, disdain'd a further stay,  
But to the palace measur'd back the way.  
There as he rested, gath'ring in a ring 135  
The peers with smiles address'd their unknown king.

Stranger, may Jove, and all th' aerial pow'rs,  
With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours!  
Our freedom to thy prowess'd arm we owe  
From bold intrusion of thy coward foe; 140  
Instant the flying sail the slave shall wing  
To Echetus, the monster of a king.

While pleas'd he hears, Antinous bears the food,  
A kid's well fatt'd entrails, rich with blood:  
The bread from canisters of shining mold 145  
Amphinomus; and wines that laugh in gold:  
And oh! (he mildly cries), may heav'n display  
A beam of glory o'er thy future day!  
Alas! the brave too oft is doom'd to bear  
The gripes of poverty, and stings of care. 150

To whom with thought mature the king replies:  
The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul is wise;  
Such was thy father! in imperial state,  
Great without vice, that oft attends the great:



## B. XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 93

Nor from the fire art thou, the son, declin'd; 155  
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!  
Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,  
Most vain is man! calamitous by birth.  
To-day with pow'r elate, in strength he blooms;  
The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes: 160  
Anon from heav'n a sad reverse he feels;  
Untaught to bear, 'gainst heav'n the wretch rebels.  
For man is changeful, as his bliss or wo;  
Too high when prosp'rous, when distress'd too low.  
There was a day, when with the scornful great 165  
I swell'd in pomp and arrogance of state;  
Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs;  
And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.  
Then let not man be proud: but firm of mind,  
Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd; 170  
Be dumb when heav'n afflicts! unlike yon train  
Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain;  
Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey:  
But vengeance and Ulysses wing their way.  
O mayst thou, favour'd by some guardian pow'r, 175  
Far, far be distant in that deathful hour!  
For sure I am, if stern Ulysses breathe,  
These lawless riots end in blood and death.  
Then to the Gods the rosy juice he pours,  
And the drain'd goblet to the chief restores. 180  
Stung to the soul, o'ercast with holy dread,  
He shook the graceful honours of his head;  
His boding mind the future wo forestalls:  
In vain! by great Telemachus he falls,  
For Pallas seals his doom: all sad he turns 185  
To join the peers; resumes his throne, and mourns.  
Meanwhile Minerva with instinctive fires  
Thy soul, Penelope, from heav'n inspires;  
With flatt'ring hopes she suitors to betray,  
And seem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day; 190

94 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVIII.

Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise,  
And crown the mother and the wife with praise.  
Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,  
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries :

Eurynome ! to go where riot reigns 195  
I feel an impulse, though my soul disdains ;  
To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,  
And in the traitor friend unmask the foe ;  
Who smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,  
Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambush'd there.

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain, 201  
(Reply'd the sagest of the royal train),  
But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend ;  
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend ;  
The tide of flowing tears a while suppress ; 205  
Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.  
Some joy remains : to thee a son is giv'n,  
Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.

Ah me ! forbear, returns the queen, forbear ;  
Oh ! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care ! 210  
No more I bathe, since he no longer sees  
Those charms, for whom alone I wish to please.  
The day that bore Ulysses from this coast,  
Blasted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.  
But instant bid Autonoe descend, 215  
Instant Hippodame our steps attend ;  
Ill suits it female virtue, to be seen  
Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while Eurynome the mandate bears,  
From heav'n Minerva shoots with guardian cares : 220  
O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,  
She pours a pleasing, deep, and deathlike rest,  
With ev'ry beauty every feature arms,  
Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms,  
In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires, 225  
(Immortal gifts ! to kindle soft desires),

## B. XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY 95

From limb to limb an air majestic sheds,  
And the pure iv'ry o'er her bosom spreads.  
Such Venus shines, when with a measur'd bound  
She smoothly gliding swims th' harmonious round, 230  
When with the Graces in the dance she moves,  
And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.

Then to the skies her flight Minerva bends,  
And to the queen the damsel train descends :  
Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes unclose; 235  
The tear she wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well; that sleep a while can free,  
With soft forgetfulness, a wretch like me !  
Oh! were it giv'n to yield this transient breath,  
Send, oh Diana! send the sleep of death! 240  
Why must I waste a tedious life in tears,  
Nor bury in the silent grave my cares?  
O my Ulysses! ever honour'd name!  
For thee I mourn, till death dissolves my frame.

Thus wailing, slow and sadly she descends, 245  
On either hand a damsel-train attends :  
Full where the dome its shining valves expands,  
Radiant before the gazing peers she stands;  
A veil translucent o'er her brow display'd,  
Her beauty seems, and only seems, to shade : 250  
Sudden she lightens in their dazzled eyes,  
And sudden flames in ev'ry bottom rise;  
They send their eager souls with ev'ry look,  
Till silence thus th' imperial matron broke :

O why! my son, why now no more appears 255  
That warmth of soul that urg'd thy younger years?  
Thy riper days no growing worth impart,  
A man in stature, still a boy in heart!  
Thy well-knit frame, unprofitably strong,  
Speaks thee an hero, from an hero sprung: 260  
But the just Gods in vain those gifts bestow,  
O wise alone in form, and brave in show!



96 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVIII.

Heav'ns! could a stranger feel oppression's hand  
Beneath thy roof, and couldst thou tamely stand?  
If thou the stranger's righteous cause decline, 265  
His is the suff'rance, but the shame is thine.

To whom, with filial awe, the prince returns:  
That gen'rous soul with just resentment burns;  
Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow  
For others good, and melt at others wo; 270  
But impotent these riots to repel,  
I bear their outrage, tho' my soul rebel:  
Helpless amid the inares of death I tread,  
And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread.  
But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds 275  
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.  
O would to Jove! or her whose arms display  
The shield of Jove! or him who rules the day!  
That yon proud suitors, who licentious tread  
These courts, within these courts like Irus bled 280  
Whose loose head tott'ring, as with wine oppress'd,  
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast;  
Pow'rless to move, his stagg'ring feet deny  
The coward wretch the privilege to fly.

Then to the queen Eurymachus replies: 285  
O justly lov'd, and not more fair than wise!  
Should Greece through all her hundred states survey  
Thy finish'd charms, all Greece would own thy sway,  
In rival crouds contest the glorious prize,  
Dispeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes: 290  
O woman! loveliest of the lovely kind,  
In body perfect, and compleat in mind!

Ah me! (returns the queen), when from this shore  
Ulysses sail'd, then beauty was no more!  
The Gods decreed these eyes no more should keep 295  
Their wonted grace, but only serve to weep.  
Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,  
My virtues last; my brightest charm is love.



## B.XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 97

Now, grief, thou all art mine! the Gods o'ercast  
My soul with woes, that long, ah long must last! 300  
Too faithfully my heart retains the day  
That sadly tore my royal lord away:  
He grasp'd my hand, And, oh my spouse! I leave  
Thy arms, (he cry'd), perhaps to find a grave:  
Fame speaks the Trojans bold; they boast the skill 305  
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,  
To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car  
With dreadful inroad through the walks of war.  
My sentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed  
Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I must bleed! 310  
My father, mother, all I trust to thee;  
To them, to them transfer the love of me:  
But when my son grows man, the royal sway  
Relinquish, and happy be thy bridal day!  
Such were his words; and Hymen now prepares 315  
To light his torch, and give me up to cares;  
Th' afflictive hand of wrathful Jove to bear:  
A wretch the most complete that breathes the air!  
Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!  
Careless to please, with insolence ye woo! 320  
The gen'rous lovers, studious to succeed,  
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;  
By precious gifts the vow sincere display:  
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.  
Well pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive 325  
The suitor train, and raise a thirst to give:  
False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,  
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.  
While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries:  
Offspring of kings, and more than woman wise! 330  
'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,  
And custom bids thee without shame receive;  
Yet never, never from thy dome we move,  
Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.

98 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVIII.

The peers dispatch their heralds to convey 335  
 The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.  
 A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,  
 The varying hues in gay confusion rise  
 Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold  
 Close to the less'ning waist the vest infold; 340  
 Down from the swelling loins, the vest unbound  
 Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.  
 A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,  
 That shot effulgence like the solar ray,  
 Eurymachus presents: and ear-rings bright, 345  
 With triple stars, that cast a trembling light.  
 Pisander bears a necklace, wrought with art;  
 And ev'ry peer, expressive of his heart,  
 A gift bestows: this done, the queen ascends,  
 And slow behind, her damsel train attends. 350

Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,  
 Till Hesperus leads forth the starry train;  
 And now he raises, as the day light fades,  
 His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades:  
 Three vases heap'd with copious fires display 355  
 O'er all the palace a fictitious day;  
 From space to space the torch wide beaming burns,  
 And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.

To whom the king: Ill suits your sex to stay  
 Alone with men! ye modest maids, away! 360  
 Go, with the queen the spindle guide, or cull  
 (The partners of her cares) the silver wool;  
 Be it my task the torches to supply,  
 Even till the morning lamp adorns the sky;  
 Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care, 365  
 Sleepless I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.

Scornful they heard: Melantho, fair and young,  
 (Melantho, from the loins of Dolius sprung,  
 Who with the queen her years an infant led,  
 With the soft fondness of a daughter bred), 270

## XXVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 99

Chiefly derides: regardless of the cares  
Her queen endures; polluted joys she shares  
Nocturnal with Eurymachus! With eyes  
That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies.

Oh! whither wanders thy distemper'd brain, 375  
Thou bold intruder on a princely train?

Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;  
Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.  
Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,  
Or flows licentious from the copious bowl? 380

Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?  
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,  
Who, short'ning with a storm of blows thy stay,  
Shall send thee howling all in blood away!

To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong! 385  
Thy lord shall curb that insolence of tongue;  
Know, to Telemachus I tell th' offence:  
The scourge, the scourge shall bath thee into sense.

With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,  
Nor longer durst sustain the sov'reign look. 390

Then to the servile task the monarch turns  
His royal hand: each torn resplendent burns  
With added day: meanwhile, in museful mood,  
Absorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he stood.  
And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs 395  
To rouse Ulysses, points the suitors tongues:  
Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man,  
Thoughtless and gay, Eurymachus began:

Hear me, (he cries), confederates and friends!  
Some God, no doubt, this stranger kindly sends; 400  
The shining baldness of his head survey,  
It aids our torch light, and reflects the ray. —

Then to the king that levell'd haughty Troy: —  
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ  
Those hands in work; to tend the rural trade, 405  
To dress the walk, and form th' embow'ring shade?



## 200 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XVIII.

So food and raiment constant will I give:

But idly thus thy soul prefers to live,

And starve by strolling, not by work to thrive. }

To whom, incens'd: Should we, O prince, engage  
In rival tasks, beneath the burning rage 411

Of summer suns; were both constrain'd to wield,

Foodless, the sithe along the burthen'd field;

Or should we labour, while the ploughshare wounds,

With steers of equal strength, th' allotted grounds: 415

Beneath my labours, how thy wond'ring eyes

Might see the fable field at once arise!

Should Jove dire war unloose, with spear, and shield,

And nodding helm, I tread th' ensanguin'd field, 419

Fierce in the van: then wouldst thou, wouldst thou,—

Misname me glutton in that glorious day? [say.—

No, thy ill judging thoughts the brave disgrace;

'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.

Proud to seem brave among a coward train!

But know, thou art not valorous, but vain. 425

Gods! should the stern Ulysses rise in might,

These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

While yet he speaks, Eurymachus replies,

With indignation flashing from his eyes.

Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong, 430

Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue;

Irrev'rend to the great, and uncontroll'd,

Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold?

Perhaps these outrages from Irus flow,

A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe! 435

He said and with full force a footstool threw:

Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew.

Ulysses, cautious of the vengeful foe,

Stoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow.

Not so a youth who dea's the goblet round, 440

Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound;



## B. XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 161

Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies,  
He thricks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,  
Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry; 445  
O had this stranger sunk to the realms beneath,  
To the black realms of darkness and of death,  
Ere yet he trod these shores! to strife he draws  
Peer against peer; and what the weighty cause?  
A vagabond! for him the great destroy, 450  
In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy!

To whom the stern Telemachus arose:  
Gods! what wild fury from the goblet flows?  
Whence this unguarded openness of soul,  
But from the licence of the copious bowl? 455  
Or heav'n delusion sends. But hence, away!  
Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abash'd, they hear the stern rebuke,  
Till thus Amphinomus the silence broke.

True are his words; and he whom truth offends, 460  
Not with Telemachus, but truth contends.  
Let not the hand of violence invade  
The rev'rend stranger, or the spotless maid:  
Retire we hence! but crown with rosy wine  
The flowing goblet to the pow'rs divine: 465  
Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands;  
This justice, this the social right demands.

The peers assent; the goblet Mutius crown'd  
With purple juice, and bore in order round;  
Each peer successive his libation pours 470  
To the bless'd Gods that fill th' aerial bow'rs;  
Then swill'd with wine, with noise the crouds obey,  
And rushing forth tumultuous reel away.



T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XIX.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The discovery of Ulysses to Euryclea.

*Ulysses and his son remove the weapons out of the armory. Ulysses, in conversation with Penelope, gives a fictitious account of his adventures; then assures her he had formerly entertained her husband in Crete, and describes exactly his person and dress; affirms to have heard of him in Phaacia and Thesprotia, and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryclea, who discovers him to be Ulysses by the scar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnassus. The poet inserts a digression, relating that accident, with all its particulars.*

**C**onsulting secret with the blue-ey'd maid,  
Still in the dome divine Ulysses staid:  
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breast;  
And thus the son the fervent fire address'd.



**B. XIX HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 103**

Instant convey those steely stores of war 5  
 To distant rooms, dispos'd with secret care :  
 The cause demanded by the suitor train,  
 To sooth their fears a specious reason feign :  
 Say, since Ulysses left his natal coast,  
 Obscene with smoke, their beamy lustre lost, 10  
 His arms deform'd, the roof they won't adorn :  
 From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.  
 Suggest, that Jove the peaceful thought inspir'd,  
 Lest they by sight of swords to fury fir'd ;  
 Dishonest wounds, or violence of soul, 15  
 Defame the bridal feast, and friendly bowl.

The prince obedient to the sage command,  
 To Euryclea thus : the female band  
 In their apartments keep ; secure the doors :  
 These swarthy arms among the covert stores 20  
 Are seemlier hid ; my thoughtless youth they blame,  
 Imbrown'd with vapour of the smould'ring flame.

In happy hour, (pleas'd Euryclea cries),  
 Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wise !  
 Inspect with sharpen'd sight, and frugal care, 25  
 Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.  
 But who the lighted taper will provide,  
 (The female train retir'd), your toils to guide ?

Without infringing hospitable right,  
 This guest (he cry'd) shall bear the guiding light : 30  
 I cheer no lazy vagrants with repast ;  
 They share the meal that earn it ere they taste.

He said ; from female ken she straight secures  
 The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors :

Auxiliar to his son, Ulysses bears 35  
 The plumed crested helms, and pointed spears,  
 With shields indented deep in glorious wars.  
 Minerva viewless on her charge attends,  
 And with her golden lamp his toil befriends :

104 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

Not such the sickly beams, which unsincere 40  
Gild the gross vapour of this nether sphere !  
A present Deity the prince confess'd ;  
And rapt with ecstasy the fire address'd.

What miracle thus dazzles with surprise !  
Distinct in rows the radiant columns rise : 45  
The walls, where-e'er my wond'ring sight I turn,  
And roofs, amidst a blaze of glory burn !  
Some visitant of pure æthereal race,  
With his bright presence deigns the dome to grace.

Be calm, replies the fire ; to none impart, 50  
But oft revolve the vision in thy heart :  
Celestials, mantled in excess of light,  
Can visit unapproach'd by mortal sight.  
Seek thou repose ; whilst here I sole remain,  
T' explore the conduct of the female train : 55  
The pensive queen perchance desires to know  
The series of my toils, to sooth her wo.

With tapers flaming day his train attends,  
His bright alcove th' obsequious youth ascends :  
Soft slumb'rous shades his drooping eye-lids close, 60  
Till on her eastern throne Aurora glows.

Whilst, forming plans of death, Ulysses staid  
In council secret with the martial maid ;  
Attendant nymphs in beauteous order wait,  
The queen descending from her bow'r of state. 65  
Her cheeks the warmer blush of Venus wear,  
Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air.

An iv'ry seat with silver ringlets grac'd.  
By fam'd Icmalius wrought, the menials plac'd :  
With iv'ry silver'd thick the footstool shone, 70  
O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown.  
The sov'reign seat with graceful air she press'd ;  
To diff'rent tasks their toil the nymphs address'd :  
The golden goblets some, and some restor'd  
From stains of luxury the polish'd board : 75



## B. XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 105

These to remove th' expiring embers came,  
While those with unctuous fir foment the flame.

'Twas then Melanthe with imperious mien  
Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of spleen:  
Avaunt, she cry'd, offensive to my sight! 80  
Deem not in ambush here to lurk by night,  
Into the woman-state asquint to pry;  
A day-devourer, and an ev'ning spy!

Vagrant, begone! before this blazing brand  
Shall urge—and wav'd it hissing in her hand. 85

Th' insulted hero rolls his wrathful eyes;  
And, Why so turbulent of soul? he cries:  
Can these lean shrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,  
These poor, but honest rags, enkindle rage?  
In crouds we wear the badge of hungry fate, 90  
And beg, degraded from superior state?

Constrain'd! a rent charge on the rich I live;  
Reduc'd to crave the good I once could give:  
A palace, wealth, and slaves I late possess'd,  
And all that mak's the great be call'd the bless'd: 95  
My gate, an emblem of my open soul,  
Embrac'd the poor and dealt a bounteous dole.

Scorn not the sad reverse, injurious maid!  
'Tis Jove's high will, and be his will obey'd!  
Nor think thyself exempt: that rosy prime 100

Must share the gen'ral doom of with'ring time:  
To some new channel soon the changeful tide  
Of royal grace th' offended queen may guide;  
And her lov'd lord unplume thy tow'ring pride. }  
Or were he dead, 'tis wisdom to beware: 105

Sweet blooms the prince beneath Apollo's care;  
Your deeds with quick impartial eye surveys,  
Potent to punish what he cannot praise.

Her keen reproach had reach'd the lov'reign's ear;  
Loquacious insolent! (she cries), forbear: 110

106 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XII.

To thee the purpose of my soul I told ;  
 Venial discourse, unblam'd, with him to hold :  
 The storied labours of my wand'ring lord,  
 To sooth my grief he haply may record.  
 Yet him, my guest, thy venom'd rage hath stung : 115  
 Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue !  
 But thou on whom my palace-cares depend,  
 Eurynome, regard the stranger-friend :  
 A seat, soft-spread with furry spoils, prepare ;  
 Due-distant, for us both to speak and hear. 120

The menial fair obeys with duteous haste :  
 A seat adorn'd with furry spoils she plac'd :  
 Due-distant for discourse the hero sat ;  
 When thus the sov'reign from her chair of state:  
 Reveal, obsequious to my first demand, 125  
 Thy name, thy lineage, and thy native land.

He thus : O queen ! whose far resounding fame  
 Is bounded only by the starry frame,  
 Consummate pattern of imperial sway,  
 Whose pious rule a warlike race obey ! 130  
 In wavy gold thy summer vales are dress'd ;  
 Thy autumns bend with copious fruit oppress'd :  
 With flocks and herds each grassy plain is stor'd ;  
 And fish of ev'ry fin thy seas afford :  
 Their affluent joys the grateful realms confess ; 135  
 And bless the pow'r that still delights to bless.  
 Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial dame !  
 Forbear to know my lineage, or my name :  
 Urge not this breast to heave, these eyes to weep ;  
 In sweet oblivion let my sorrow sleep ! 140  
 My woes awak'd will violate your ear,  
 And to this gay censorious train appear  
 A windy vapour melting in a tear. }

Their gifts the Gods resum'd, (the queen rejoin'd),  
 Exterior grace, and energy of mind, 145

## B.XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 107

When the dear partner of my nuptial joy,  
Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer Troy.  
My lord's protecting hand alone would raise  
My drooping verdure, and extend my praise!  
Peers from the distant Samian shore resort; 150  
Here with Dulichians join'd, besiege the court:  
Zacynthus, green with ever-shady groves,  
And Ithaca, presumptuous boast their loves:  
Obtruding on my choice a second lord,  
They press the Hymenæan rite abhorr'd. 155  
Misrule thus mingling with domestic cares,  
I live regardless of my state-affairs:  
Receive no stranger guest, no poor relieve;  
But ever for my lord in secret grieve!——  
This art, instinct by some celestial pow'r, 160  
I try'd, elusive of the bridal hour:  
"Ye peers," I cry, "who press to gain a heart,  
"Where dead Ulysses claims no future part;  
"Rebate your loves, each rival suit suspend,  
"Till this funereal web my labours end; 165  
"Cease, till to good Laertes I bequeath  
"A pall of state, the ornament of death.  
"For when to fate he bows, each Grecian dame  
"With just reproach were licens'd to defame,  
"Should he, long honour'd in supreme command, 170  
"Want the last duties of a daughter's hand."  
The fiction pleas'd! their loves I long elude;  
The night still ravell'd what the day renew'd;  
Three years successful in my art conceal'd,  
My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal'd: 175  
Befriended by my own domestic spies,  
The woof unwrought the suitor-train surprise.  
From nuptial rites they now no more recede,  
And fear forbids to falsify the breed.  
My anxious parents urge a speedy choice, 180  
And to their suffrage gain the filial voice:

108 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XII.

For rule mature, Telemachus deplores  
His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores——  
But stranger ! as thy days seem full of fate,  
Divide discourse, in turn thy birth relate 185  
Thy port asserts thee of distinguish'd race;  
No poor unfather'd product of disgrace.

Princess ! he cries, renew'd by your command,  
The dear remembrance of my native land,  
Of secret grief unseals the fruitful source, 190  
And tears repeat their long-forgotten course !  
So pays the wretch, whom fate constrains to roam,  
The dues of nature to his natal home !——  
But inward on my soul let sorrow prey ;  
Your sov'reign will my duty bids obey. 195

Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil !  
And ninety cities crown the sea-born isle :  
Mix'd with her genuine sons, adopted names  
In various tongues avow their various claims :  
Cydonians dreadful with the bended yew, 200  
And bold Pelasgi boast a native's due :  
The Dorians, plum'd amid the files of war,  
Her fruitful glebe with fierce Achaians share :  
Cnossus, her capital of high command ;  
Where sceptred Minos with impartial hand 205  
Divided right ; each ninth revolving year,  
By Jove receiv'd in council to confer,  
His son Deucaion bore successive sway ;  
His son, who gave me first to view the day !  
The royal bed an elder issue blest, 210  
Idomeneus, whom Ilion fields attest  
Of matchless deed : untrain'd to martial toil  
I liv'd inglorious in my native isle,  
Studious of peace ; and Æthon is my name.  
'Twas then to Crete the great Ulysses came ; 215  
For elemental war, and wintry Jove,  
From Malea's gulfy cape his navy drove



**XXIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 109**

To bright Lucina's fane; the shelvy coast  
Where loud Amnifus in the deep is lost.  
His vessels moor'd, (an incommodious port!) 220  
The hero speeded to the Cnossian court:  
Ardent the partner of his arms to find;  
In leagues of long commutual friendship join'd.  
Vain hope! ten furs had warm'd the western strand,  
Since my brave brother with his Cretan band 225  
Had sail'd for Troy: but to the genial feast  
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal guest:  
Beeves for his train the Cnossian peers assign,  
A public treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.  
Twelve days while Boreas vex'd th' aerial space, 230  
My hospitable dome he deign'd to grace:  
And when the north had ceas'd the stormy roar,  
He wing'd his voyage to the Phrygian shore.  
Thus the fam'd hero, perfected in wiles,  
With fair similitude of truth beguiles 235  
The queen's attentive ear: dissolv'd in wo,  
From her bright eyes the tears unbounded flow.  
As snows collected on the mountain freeze;  
When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,  
The fleecy pile obeys the whisp'ring gales, 240  
Ends in a stream, and murmurs through the vales:  
So, melted with the pleasing tale he told,  
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd:  
She to her present lord laments him lost,  
And views that object which she wants the most! 245  
With'ring at heart to see the weeping fair,  
His eyes look'd stern, and cast a gloomy stare;  
Of horn the stiff relentless balls appear,  
Or globes of iron fix'd in either sphere;  
Firm wisdom interdicts the soft'ning tear. 250  
A speechless interval of grief ensues,  
Till thus the queen the tender theme renews,

# TO HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

Stranger ! that ere thy hospitable roof  
 Ulysses grac'd, confirm by faithful proof :  
 Delineate to my view my warlike lord, 255  
 His form, his habit, and his train record.

'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to sudden sight  
 Ideas that have wing'd their distant flight :  
 Rare on the mind these images are trac'd,  
 Whose footsteps twenty winters have defac'd : 260

But what I can, receive. — In ample mode,  
 A robe of military purple flow'd  
 O'er all his frame : illustrious on his breast,  
 The double clasping gold the king confest.

In the rich woof a hound, mosaic-drawn, 265  
 Bore on full stretch, and seiz'd a dappled fawn :  
 Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold ;  
 They pant, and struggle in the moving gold.

Fine as a filmy web, beneath it shone  
 A vest, that dazzled like a cloudless sun : 270

The female train who round him throng'd to gaze,  
 In silent wonder sigh'd unwilling praise.

A sabre, when the warrior press'd to part,  
 I gave, enamel'd with Vulcanian art :

A mantle purple-ting'd, and radiant vest, 275  
 Dimension'd equal to his size, express  
 Affection grateful to my honour'd guest. }

A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,  
 His visage solemn sad, of fable hue :

Short woolly curls o'erflec'd his bending head, 280  
 O'er which a promontory-shoulder spread :

Eurybates ! in whose large soul alone  
 Ulysses view'd an image of his own.

His speech the tempest of her grief restor'd ;  
 In all he told she recognis'd her lord : 285

But when the storm was spent in plenteous show'rs,  
 A pause inspiring her languish'd pow'rs :

**B. XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 111**

O thou, the cry'd, whom first inclement fate  
Made welcome to my hospitable gate!  
With all thy wants the name of poor shall end; 290  
Henceforth live honour'd, my domestic friend!  
The vest much envy'd on your native coast,  
And regal robe with figur'd gold emboss,  
In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,  
When my lov'd lord this blissful bow'r enjoy'd; 295  
The fall of Troy, erroneous and forlorn,  
Doom'd to survive, and never to return!

Then he, with pity touch'd: O royal dame!  
Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame,  
From the devouring rage of grief reclaim. 300  
I not the fondness of your soul reprove  
For such a lord! who crown'd your virgin-love  
With the dear blessing of a fair increase;  
Himself adorn'd with more than mortal grace:  
Yet while I speak, the mighty wo suspend; 305  
Truth forms my tale; to pleasing truth attend.  
The royal object of your dearest care  
Breathes in no distant clime the vital air:  
In rich Thesprotia, and the nearer bound  
Of Thessaly, his name I heard renown'd: 310  
Without retinue, to that friendly shore  
Welcom'd with gifts of price, a sumless store!  
His sacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey  
On herds devoted to the God of day,  
Were doom'd by Jove, and Phœbus' just decree, 315  
To perish in the rough Erinacrian sea.  
To better fate the blameless chief ordain'd,  
A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,  
And rode the storm: till by the billows tost,  
He land'd on the fair Phæacian coast. 320  
That race, who emulate the life of Gods,  
Receive him joyous to their blest'd abodes:

# 172 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX

Large gifts confer, a ready sail command,  
 To speed his voyage to the Grecian strand.  
 But your wise lord, (in whose capacious soul 325  
 High schemes of pow'r in just succession roll),  
 His Ithaca refus'd; am favouring fate,  
 Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.  
 Phedon the fact affirm'd, whose sov'reign sway  
 Thesprotian tribes, a duteous race obey; 330  
 And bade the Gods this added truth attest,  
 (While pure libations crown'd the genial feast),  
 That anchor'd in his port the vessels stand,  
 To waft the hero to his natal land.  
 For Dulichium urge the wat'ry way, 335  
 But first the Ulyssæan wealth survey:  
 So rich the value of a store so vast  
 Demands the pomp of centuries to waste!  
 The darling object of your royal love,  
 Was journey'd thence to Dodonean Jove; 340  
 By the sure precept of the sylvan shrine,  
 To form the conduct of his great design:  
 Irresolute of soul, his state to shrowd  
 In dark disguise, or come a king avow'd?  
 Thus lives your lord; nor longer doom'd to roam, 345  
 Soon will he grace his dear paternal dome.  
 By Jove, the source of good, supreme in pow'r!  
 By the bless'd genius of this friendly bow'r!  
 I ratify my speech; before the sun  
 His annual longitude of heav'n shall run; 350  
 When the pale empress of yon starry train  
 In the next month renews her faded wane,  
 Ulysses will assert his rightful reign.

What thanks? what boon! (reply'd the queen), are  
 due,

When time shall prove the storied blessing true? 355  
 My lord's return should fate no more retard,  
 Envy shall sicken at thy vast reward.



## XXIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 113

But my prophetic fears, alas ! presage,  
The wounds of destiny's relentless rage.  
I long must weep ! nor will Ulysses come, 360  
With royal gifts to send you honour'd home ! —  
You other talk, ye menial train, forbear.  
Now wash the stranger, and the bed prepare,  
With splendid palls the downy fleece adorn :  
Uprising early with the purple morn, 365  
His sinews thrunk with age, and stiff with toil,  
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil.  
Then with Telemachus the social feast  
Partaking free, my sole invited guest ;  
Whoe'er neglects to pay distinction due, 370  
The breach of hospitable right may rue.  
The vulgar of my sex I most exceed  
In real fame, when most humane my deed :  
And vainly to the praise of queen aspire,  
If, stranger ! I permit that mean attire, 375  
Beneath the feastful bow'r. A narrow space  
Confines the circle of our destin'd race ;  
'Tis ours with good the scanty round to grace.  
Those who to cruel wrong their state abuse,  
Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curse pursues ; 380  
By death disrob'd of all their savage pow'rs,  
Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.  
But he whose inborn worth his acts commend,  
Of gentle soul, to human race a friend ;  
The wretched he relieves diffuse his fame, 385  
And distant tongues extol the patron name.

Princess (he cry'd) in vain your bounties flow  
On me, confirm'd, and obstinate in wo.  
When my lov'd Crete receiv'd my final view,  
And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew ; 390  
These tatter'd weeds (my decent robe resign'd)  
I chose, the liv'ry of a woful mind !

114 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

Nor will my heart-corroding cares abate  
With splendid palls, and canopies of state;  
Low-couch'd on earth, the gift of sleep I scorn, 395  
And catch the glances of the waking morn.  
The delicacy of your courtly train

To wash a wretched wand'rer would disdain;  
But if, in track of long experience try'd,  
And sad similitude of woes ally'd, 400  
Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,  
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.

Pleas'd with his wife reply, the queen rejoin'd:  
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,  
In all who grac'd this hospitable bow'r 405  
I ne'er discern'd, before this social hour.

Such servant as your humble choice requires,  
To light receiv'd the lord of my desires,  
New from the birth; and with a mother's hand  
His tender bloom to manly growth sustain'd. 410

Of matchless prudence, and a dutious mind  
Though now to life's extremest verge declin'd,  
Of strength superior to the toil assign'd. — }

Rise, Euryclea! with officious care  
For the poor friend the cleansing bath prepare: 415  
This debt his correspondent fortunes claim,  
Too like Ulysses, and perhaps the same!  
Thus old with woes my fancy paints him now!  
For age untimely marks the careful brow.

Instant obsequious to the mild command, 420  
Sad Euryclea rose: with trembling hand  
She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes;  
And thus impassion'd to herself replies.

Son of my love, and monarch of my cares!  
What pangs for thee this wretched bosom bears! 425  
Are thus by Jove who constant beg his aid  
With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid?

**B. XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 115**

He never dar'd defraud the sacred fane,  
Of perfect hecatombs in order slain:  
There oft implor'd his tutelary pow'r, 430  
Long to protract the sad sepulchral hour;  
That form'd for empire with paternal care,  
His realm might recognise an equal heir.  
O destin'd head! The pious vows are lost;  
His God forgets him on a foreign coast! — 435

Perhaps, like thee, poor guest! in wanton pride  
The rich insult him, and the young deride!  
Conscious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind  
The friendly rite of purity declin'd;  
My will concurring with my queen's command, 440  
Accept the bath from this obsequious hand.  
A strong emotion shakes my anguish'd breast;  
In thy whole form Ulysses seems express:  
Of all the wretched harbour'd on our coast,  
None imag'd e'er like thee my master lost. 445

Thus half discover'd through the dark disguise,  
With cool composure feign'd, the chief replies.  
You join your suffrage to the public vote;  
The same you think, have all beholders thought.

He said: replenish'd from the purest springs, 450  
The laver straight with busy care she brings:  
In the deep vase, that shone like burnish'd gold,  
The boiling fluid temperates the cold.

Meantime revolving in his thoughtful mind  
The scar with which his manly knee was sign'd; 455  
His face averting from the crackling blaze,  
His shoulders intercept th' unfriendly rays.  
Thus cautious, in th' obscure he hop'd to fly  
The curious search of Euryclea's eye.

Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find 460  
The scar with which his manly knee was sign'd.

This on Parnassus (combating the bear)  
With glancing rage the tusky savage tore.

216 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B XIX.

Attended by his brave maternal race,  
 His grandfire sent him to the sylvan chase, 465  
 Autolycus the bold; (a mighty name  
 For spotless faith, and deeds of martial fame:  
 Hermes his patron-god those gifts bestow'd,  
 Whose shrine with weanling lambs he went to load).  
 His course to Ithaca this hero sped, 470  
 When the first product of Laertes' bed  
 Was new disclos'd to birth: the banquet ends,  
 When Euryclea from the queen descends, }  
 And to his fond embrace the babe commends.  
 "Receive," she cries, "your royal daughter's son; 475  
 "And name the blessing that your pray'rs have won."  
 Then thus the hoary chief. "My victor arms  
 "Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms:  
 "A sure memorial of my dreaded fame.  
 "The boy shall bear; Ulysses be his name! 480  
 "And when with filial love the youth shall come }  
 "To view his mother's soil, my Delphic dome  
 "With gifts of price shall send him joyous home." }  
 Lur'd with the promis'd boon, when youthful prime  
 Ended in man, his mother's natal clime 485  
 Ulysses sought; with fond affection dear  
 Amphithea's arms receiv'd the royal heir:  
 Her ancient \* lord an equal joy possess'd;  
 Instant he bade prepare the genial feast:  
 A steer to form the sumptuous banquet bled, 490  
 Whose stately growth five flow'ry summers fed:  
 His sons divide, and roast with artful care  
 The limbs; then all the tasteful viands share.  
 Nor ceas'd discourse (the banquet of the soul)  
 Till Phœbus wheeling to the western goal 495  
 Resign'd the skies, and night involv'd the pole.

\* Autolycus.



# **XXIX HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 117**

Their drooping eyes the slumb'rous shade oppress,  
Sated they rose, and all retir'd to rest.

Soon as the morn, new rob'd in purple light,  
Pierc'd with her golden shafts the rear of night; 500  
Ulysses, and his brave maternal race  
The young Autolyce, assay the chase.  
Barnassus, thick perplex'd with horrid shades,  
With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter troop invades;  
What time the sun, from ocean's peaceful stream, 505  
Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam.

The pack impatient snuff the tainted gale;  
The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce assail;  
And foremost of the train, his cornel spear  
Ulysses wav'd, to rouse the savage war. 510  
Deep in the rough recesses of the wood,  
A lofty copse, the growth of ages, stood:  
Nor winter's boreal blast, nor thund'rous show'r,  
Nor solar ray, could pierce the shady bow'r,  
With wither'd foliage strew'd, a heapy store! 515

The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar.  
Rous'd by the hounds' and hunters' mingling cries,  
The savage from his leafy shelter flies:  
With fiery glare his sanguine eye-balls shine,  
And bristles high impale his horrid chine. 520  
Young Ithacus, advanc'd, defies the foe,  
Poising his lifted lance in act to throw:

The savage renders vain the wound decreed,  
And springs impetuous with opponent speed!  
His tusks oblique he aim'd, the knee to gore; 525  
Aslope they glanc'd, the sinewy fibres tore,  
And bar'd the bone: Ulysses undismay'd,

Soon with redoubled force the wound repay'd;  
To the right shoulder joint the spear apply'd:  
His further flank with streaming purple dy'd: 530  
On earth he rush'd with agonizing pain;  
With joy, and vast surprise, th' applauding train  
View'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.

# 118 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

With bandage firm Ulysses' knee they bound;  
 Then chanting mystic lays, the closing wound 535  
 Of sacred melody confess'd the force;  
 The tides of life regain'd their azure course.  
 Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim.  
 Autolycus, enamour'd with his fame,  
 Confirm'd the cure: and from the Deiphic dome 540  
 With added gifts return'd him glorious home.  
 He safe at Ithaca with joy receiv'd,  
 Relates the chace, and early praise achiev'd.  
 Deep o'er his knee inseam'd, remain'd the scar:  
 Which noted token of the woodland war 545  
 When Euryclea found, to'ablution ceas'd;  
 Down dropt the leg, from the fluck hand releas'd;  
 The mingled fluids from the vate rebound;  
 The vase reclining floats the floor around!  
 Smiles dew'd with tears the pleasing strife express 550  
 Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breast.  
 Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd;  
 At length abrupt—My son!—my king!—the cry'd.  
 His neck with fond embrace infolding fast,  
 Full on the queen her raptur'd eyes she cast, 555  
 Ardent to speak the monarch safe restor'd:  
 But studious to conceal her royal lord,  
 Minerva fix'd her mind on views remote,  
 And from the present bliss abstracts her thought.  
 His hand to Euryclea's mouth apply'd, 560  
 Art thou foredoom'd my pest? the hero cry'd:  
 Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd;  
 And have the fates thy babbling age ordain'd  
 To violate the life thy youth sustain'd? }  
 An exile have I told, with weeping eyes, 565  
 Full twenty annual suns in distant skies:  
 At length return'd, some God inspires thy breast  
 To know thy king, and here I stand confess.

## B. IX HOMER'S ODYSSEY 119

This heav'n discover'd truth to thee consign'd,  
Reserve, the treasure of thy inmost mind; 570  
Else if the Gods my vengeful arm sustain,  
And prostrate to my sword the suitor train:  
With their lewd mates, thy undistinguish'd age  
Shall bleed a victim to vindictive rage.

Then thus rejoind the dame, devoid of fear, 575  
What words, my son, have pass'd thy lips severe?  
Deep in my soul the truth shall lodge secur'd;  
With ribs of steel, and marble heart, immur'd.  
When heav'n, auspicious to thy right avow'd,  
Shall prostrate to thy sword the suitor-croud; 580  
The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;  
The lewd to death devote, the virtuous spare.

Thy aid avails me not, the chief reply'd;  
My own experience shall their doom decide;  
A witness judge precludes a long appeal: 585  
Suffice it thee thy monarch to conceal.

He said: obsequious with redoubled pace  
She to the fount conveys th' exhausted vase:  
The bath renew'd, she ends the pleasing toil  
With plenteous unction of ambrosial oil. 590  
Adjusting to his limbs the tatter'd vest,  
His former seat receiv'd the stranger guest;  
Whom thus with pensive air the queen address.

Tho' night, dissolving grief in grateful ease,  
Your drooping eyes with soft oppression seize; 595  
A while, reluctant to her pleasing force,  
Suspend the restless hour with sweet discourse.  
The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy!)  
My menials, and domestic cares employ:  
And, unattended by sincere repose, 600  
The night afflicts my ever wakeful woes:  
When nature's hush'd beneath her brooding shade,  
My echoing griefs the starry vault invade.

# 120 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,  
 Sad Philomel, in bow'ry shades unseen, 605  
 To vernal airs attunes her varied strains;  
 And Itylus sounds warbling o'er the plains:  
 Young Itylus, his parents darling joy!  
 Whom chance misled the mother to destroy:  
 Now doom'd a wakeful bird to veil the beauteous }  
 boy. 610

So, in nocturnal solitude forlorn,  
 A sad variety of woes I mourn!  
 My mind reflective, in a thorny maze  
 Devius, from care to care incessant strays.  
 Now, wav'ring doubt succeeds to long despair; 615  
 Shall I my virgin nuptial vow revere;  
 And joining to my son's y menial train,  
 Partake his councils, and assist his reign?  
 Or, since mature in manhood, he deploras  
 His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores; 620  
 Shall I, reluctant! to his will accord;  
 And from the peers select the noblest lord;  
 So by my choice avow'd, at length decide  
 These wasteful love-debates, a mourning bride?  
 A visionary thought I'll now relate, 625  
 Illustrate, if you know, the shadow'd fate.

A team of twenty geese (a snow-white train!)  
 Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,  
 Amuse my pensive hours. The bird of Jove  
 Fierce from his mountain-eyrie downward drove; 630  
 Each favourite fowl he pounc'd with deathful sway,  
 And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.  
 My pitying eyes effus'd a plenteous stream,  
 To view their death thus imag'd in a dream:  
 With tender sympathy to sooth my soul, 635  
 A troop of matrons, fancy form'd, condole.  
 But whilst with grief and rage my bosom burn'd,  
 Sudden the tyrant of the skies return'd:



# **XXIX HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 121**

Perch'd on the battlements he thus began,  
(In form an eagle, but in voice a man). 640

O queen! no vulgar vision of the sky  
I come, prophetic of approaching joy:  
View in this plummy form thy victor lord;  
The geese (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd,  
Portend the suitors fated to my sword. 645 }

This said, the pleasing feather'd omen ceas'd,  
When from the downy bands of sleep releas'd,  
Fast by the limpid lake my swan-like train  
I found, in attitude of the golden grain.

The vision self-explain'd (the chief replies) 650  
Sincere reveals the sanction of the skies;  
Ulysses speaks his own return decreed,  
And by his sword the suitors sure to bleed.

Hard is the task, and rare (the queen rejoin'd)  
Impending destinies in dreams to find: 655

Immur'd within the silent bow'r of sleep,  
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:  
Of iv'ry one; whence fit to mock the brain,  
Of winged lies a light fantastic train:  
The gate oppos'd pellucid valves adorn, 660  
And columns fair incas'd with polish'd horn;  
Where images of truth for passage wait,  
With visions manifest of future fate.

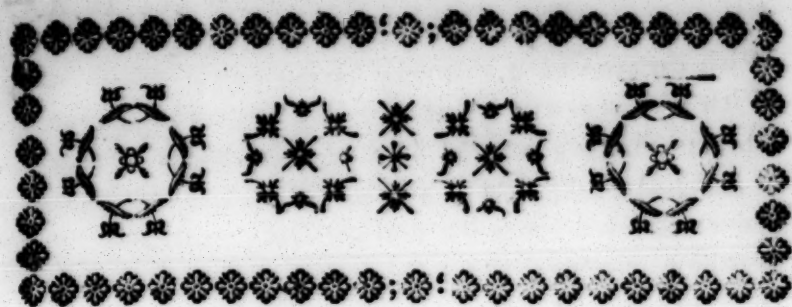
Not to this troop, I fear, that phantom soar'd,  
Which spoke Ulysses to his realm restor'd; 665

Deceive remembrance! — But my remnant life  
Heav'n shall determine in a gameful strife:  
With that fam'd bow Ulysses taught to bend,  
For me the rival archers shall contend.

As on the lifted field he us'd to place 670  
Six beams, oppos'd to six in equal space;  
Elaunc'd afo'r by his unerring art,  
Sure thro' six circlets flew the whizzing dart.

422 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XIX.

So, when the sun restores the purple day,  
 Their strength and skill the suitors shall assay, 675  
 To him the spousal honour is decreed,  
 Who through the rings directs the feather'd reed.  
 Torn from these walls (where long the kinder pow'rs  
 With pomp and joy have wing'd my youthful hours!)  
 On this poor breast no dawn of bliss shall beam; 680  
 The pleasure past supplies a copious theme  
 For many a dreary thought, and many a doleful dream!  
 Propose the sportive lot (the chief replies),  
 Nor dread to name yourself the bowyer's prize.  
 Ulysses will surprise th' unfinish'd game 685  
 Avow'd, and falsify the suitors' claim.  
 To whom with grace serene the queen rejoin'd.  
 In all thy speech what pleasing force I find!  
 O'er my suspended woe thy words prevail,  
 I part reluctant from the pleasing tale. 690  
 But heav'n, that knows what all terrestrials need,  
 Repose to night, and toil to day decreed:  
 Grateful vicissitude! yet me withdrawn,  
 Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn  
 Establish'd use enjoins; to rest and joy 695  
 Estrang'd, since dear Ulysses sail'd to Troy!  
 Meantime instructed is the menial tribe  
 Your couch to fashion as yourself prescribe.  
 Thus affable, her bower the queen ascends;  
 The sov'reign step a beauteous train attends; 700  
 There imag'd to her soul Ulysses rose;  
 Down her pale cheek new-streaming sorrow flows:  
 Till soft oblivious shade Minerva spread,  
 And o'er her eyes ambrosial slumber shed.



T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XX.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

*While Ulysses lies in the vestibule of the palace, he is witness to the disorders of the women. Minerva comforts him, and casts him asleep. At his awaking he desires a favourable sign from Jupiter, which is granted. The feast of Apollo is celebrated by the people, and the suitors banquet in the palace. Telemachus exerts his authority amongst them; notwithstanding which, Ulysses is insulted by Uteippus, and the rest continue in their excesses. Strange prodigies are seen by Theoclymenus the augur, who explains them to the destruction of the wooers.*

**A**N ample hide divine Ulysses spread,  
And form'd of fleecy skins his humble bed;  
(The remnants of the spoil the suitor crowd  
In festival devour'd, and victims vow'd).

124 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XX.

Then o'er the chief, Eurynome the chaste  
With duteous care a downy carpet cast :  
With dire revenge his thoughtful bosom glows,  
And ruminating wrath, he scorns repose.

As thus pavilion'd in the porch he lay,  
Scenes of lewd loves his wakeful eyes survey,  
Whilst to nocturnal joys impure, repair  
With wanton glee, the prostituted fair.  
His heart with rage this new dishonour stung,  
Wav'ring his thoughts in dubious balance hung ;  
Or, instant should he quench the guilty flame  
With their own blood, and intercept the shame ;  
Or to their lust indulge a last embrace,  
And let the peers contummate the disgrace ;  
Round his swol'n heart the murmur'ous fury rolls ;  
As o'er her young the mother mastiff growls,  
And bays the stranger groom : so wrath compress  
Recoiling, mutter'd thunder in his breast.  
Poor suff'ring heart ! (he cry'd), support the pain  
Of wounded honour, and thy rage restrain.  
Not fiercer woes thy fortitude could soil,  
When the brave partners of thy ten years foil  
Dire Polypheme devour'd : I then was freed,  
By patient prudence, from the death decreed.

Thus anchor'd safe on reason's peaceful coast,  
Tempests of wrath his soul no longer tost ;  
Restless his body rolls, to rage resign'd :  
As one who long with pale ey'd famine pin'd,  
The sav'ry cates on glowing embers cast  
Incessant turns, impatient for repast :  
Ulysses so, from side to side devolv'd,  
In self debate the suitors doom resolv'd.  
When in the form of mortal nymph array'd,  
From heav'n descends the Jove-born martial maid ;  
And hov'ring o'er his head in view confess'd,  
The Goddess thus her fav'rite care address'd.



## B. XX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 125

Oh thou, of mortals most inur'd to woes!  
Why roll those eyes untrien'd of repose?  
Beneath thy palace roof forget thy care;  
Bless'd in thy queen! bless'd in thy blooming heir!  
Whom, to the Gods when suppliant fathers bow, 45  
They name the standard of their dearest vow.

Just is thy kind reproach, (the chief rejoin'd);  
Deeds full of fate distract my various mind,  
In contemplation wrapt. This hostile crew  
What single arm hath prowess to subdue? 50  
Or if by Jove's and thy auxiliar aid  
They're doom'd to bleed; O say, celestial maid!  
Where shall Ulysses shun, or how sustain,  
Nations embattled to revenge the slain?

Oh impotence of faith! (Minerva cries): 55  
If man on frail unknowing man relies,  
Doubt you the Gods? Lo Pallas' self descends,  
In pires thy counsels, and thy toils attends.  
In me affianc'd, fortify thy breast,  
Though myriads leagu'd thy rightful claim contest: 60  
My sure divinity shall bear the shield,  
And edge thy sword to reap the glorious field.  
Now pay the debt to craving nature due,  
Her faded pow'rs with balmy rest renew.  
She ceas'd: ambrosial slumbers seal his eyes; 65  
His care dissolves in visionary joys:  
The Goddess, pleas'd, regains her natal skies.

Not so the queen; the downy bands of sleep  
By grief relax'd, she wak'd again to weep:  
A gloomy pause ensu'd of dumb despair; 70  
Then thus her fate invok'd, with fervent pray'r.

Diana! speed thy deathful ebon dart,  
And cure the pangs of this convulsive heart.  
Snatch me, ye whirlwinds! far from human race,  
Toss'd through the void illimitable space: 75

126 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XX.

Or if dismounted from the rapid cloud,  
 Me with his whelming wave let ocean shroud !  
 So, Pandarus, thy hopes, three orphans fair,  
 Were doom'd to wander through the devious air ;  
 Thyself untimely and thy comfort dy'd, 80  
 But four celestials both your cares supply'd.  
 Venus in tender delicacy rears  
 With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years ;  
 Imperial Juno to their youth assign'd  
 A form majestic, and sagacious mind ; 85  
 With shapely growth Diana grac'd the bloom,  
 And Pallas taught the texture of the loom.  
 But whilst, to learn their lots in nuptial love,  
 Bright Cytherea sought the bow'r of Jove ;  
 (The God supreme, to whose eternal eye 90  
 The registers of fate expanded lie) ;  
 Wing'd Harpies snatch'd th' unguarded charge away,  
 And to the furies bore a grateful prey.  
 Be such my lot ! or thou Diana speed  
 Thy shaft, and send me joyful to the dead, 95  
 To seek my lord among the warrior-train,  
 Ere second vows my bridal faith profane.  
 When woes the waking sense alone assail,  
 Whilst night extends her soft oblivious veil,  
 Of other wretches care the torture ends : 100  
 No truce the warfare of my heart suspends !  
 The night renews the day-distracting theme,  
 And airy terrors fable ev'ry dream.  
 The last alone a kind illusion wrought,  
 And to my bed my lov'd Ulysses brought, 105  
 In manly bloom, and each majestic grace,  
 As when for Troy he left my fond embrace :  
 Such raptures in my beating bosom rise,  
 I deem it sure a vision of the skies.  
 Thus, whilst Aurora mounts her purple throne, 110  
 In audible laments she breathes her moan ;

## **B XX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 127**

The sounds assault Ulysses' wakeful ear ;  
Mis-judging of the cause, a sudden fear  
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms ;  
He thinks the queen is rushing to his arms. 115  
Upspringing from his couch, with active haste,  
The fleece and carpet in the dome he plac'd :  
(He hide, without, imbib'd the morning air),  
And thus the Gods invok'd, with ardent pray'r.

Jove, and æthereal thrones ! with heav'n to friend,  
If the long series of my woes shall end ; 121  
Of human race now rising from repose,  
Let one a blissful omen here disclose ;  
And to confirm my faith, propitious Jove !  
Vouchsafe the sanction of a sign above. 125

Whilst lowly thus the chief adoring bows,  
The pitying God his guardian aid avows.  
Loud from a sapphire sky his thunder sounds :  
With springing hope the hero's heart rebounds.  
Soon, with consummate joy to crown his pray'r, 130  
An omen'd voice invades his ravish'd ear.  
Beneath a pile that close the dome adjoin'd,  
Twelve female slaves the gift of Ceres grind ;  
Task'd for the royal board to bolt the bran  
From the pure flour, (the growth and strength of man) ;  
Discharging to the day the labour due, 136  
Now early to repose the rest withdrew ;  
One maid, unequal to the task assign'd,  
Still turn'd the toilsome mill with anxious mind ;  
And thus in bitterness of soul divin'd. 140 }

Father of Gods and men ! whose thunders roll  
O'er the cærulean vault, and shake the pole ;  
Whoe'er from heav'n has gain'd this rare ostent,  
(Of granted vows a certain signal sent),  
In this bless'd moment of accepted pray'r, 145  
Piteous, regard a wretch consum'd with care !

128 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XX.

Instant, O Jove! confound the suitor train,  
For whom o'er toil'd I grind the golden grain :  
Far from this dome the lewd devourers cast,  
And be this festival decreed their last! 150

Big with their doom denounc'd in earth and sky,  
Ulysses' heart dilates with secret joy  
Meantime the menial train with unctuous wood  
Heap'd high the genial hearth, Vulcanian food :  
When, early dress'd advanc'd the royal heir ; 155  
With manly grasp he wav'd a martial spear,  
A radiant sabre grac'd his purple zone,  
And on his foot the golden sandal shone.  
His steps impetuous to the portal press'd ;  
And Euryclea thus he there address'd. 160

Say thou, to whom my youth its nurture owes,  
Was care for due refection, and repose,  
Bestow'd the stranger-guest? or waits he griev'd,  
His age not honour'd, nor his wants reliev'd?  
Promiscuous grace on all the queen confers ; 165  
(In woes bewilder'd, oft the wisest errs.)  
The wordy vagrant to the dole aspires,  
And modest worth with noble scorn retires.

She thus : O cease that ever-honour'd name  
To blemish now ; it ill deserves your blame. 170  
A bowl of gen'rous wine suffic'd the guest ;  
In vain the queen the night refection prest ;  
Nor would he court repose in downy state,  
Unblest'd, abandon'd to the rage of fate !  
A hide beneath the portico was spread, 175  
And fleecy skins compos'd an humble bed :  
A downy carpet cast with duteous care  
Secur'd him from the keen nocturnal air.

His cornel jav'lin pois'd, with regal port,  
To the sage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court, 180  
Forth issuing from the dome, the prince repair'd :  
Two dogs of chace, a lion hearted guard,



**B. XX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 129**

Behind him sourly stalk'd. Without delay  
The dame divides the labour of the day;  
Thus urging to the toil the menial train. 185 }  
What marks of luxury the marble stain!  
Its wonted lustre let the floor regain;  
The seats with purple clothe in order due;  
And let th' absterfivè sponge the board renew:  
Let some refresh the vase's sullied mold; 190  
Some bid the goblets boast their native gold:  
Some to the spring, with each a jar, repair,  
And copious waters pure for bathing bear;  
Dispatch for soon the suitors will assay  
The lunar feast rites to the God of day. 195

She said; with duteous haste a bevy fair  
Of twenty virgins to the spring repair:  
With varied toils the rest adorn the dome.  
Magnificent, and blithe, the suitors come.  
Some wield the founding axe the dotter'd oaks 200  
Divide, obedient to the forceful strokes.  
Soon from the fount, with each a brimming urn,  
(Eumæus in their train), the maids return.  
Three porkers for the feast, all brawny-chin'd,  
He brought; the choicest of the tuskè kind: 205  
In lodgments first secure his care he view'd,  
Then to the king this friendly speech renew'd:  
Now say sincere, my guest! the suitor train  
Still treat they worth with lordly dull disdain;  
Or speaks their deed a bounteous mind humane? 210 }

Some pitying God (Ulysses sad reply'd)  
With vilièd vengeance blast their tow'ring pride!  
No conscious blush, no sense of right restrains  
The tides of lust that swell their boiling veins:  
From vice to vice their appetites are tost, 215  
All cheaply satèd at another's cost.

While thus the chief his woes indignant told,  
Melanthius, master of the bearded fold,

130 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B.XX.

The goodliest goats of all the royal herd  
Spontaneous to the suitors' feast preferr'd: 220

Two grooms assistant bore the victims bound;  
With quav'ring cries the vaulted roofs resound:  
And to the chief austere, aloud began  
The wretch unfriendly to the race of man.

Here, vagrant, still? offensive to my lords! 225  
Blows have more energy than airy words;  
These arguments I'll use: nor conscious shame,  
Nor threats, thy bold intrusion will reclaim.  
On this high feast the meanest vulgar boast  
A plenteous board! Hence! seek another host! 230

Rejoinder to the churl the king disdain'd,  
But shook his head, and rising wrath restrain'd.

From Cephalenia cross the surgy main  
Phætius late arriv'd, a faithful swain.  
A steer ungrateful to the bull's embrace, 235  
And goats he brought, the pride of all their race;  
Imported in a shallop not his own:  
The dome re-echo'd to their mingled moan.  
Straight to the guardian of the bristly kind  
He thus began, benevolent of mind. 240

What guest is he, of such majestic air?  
His lineage and paternal clime declare:  
Dim through th' eclipse of fate, the rays divine  
Of sov'reign state with faded splendour shine.  
If monarchs by the Gods are plung'd in wo, 245  
To what abyss are we foredoom'd to go!  
Then affable he thus the chief address'd,  
Whilst with pathetic warmth his hand he press'd.

Stranger! may fate a milder aspect shew,  
And spin thy future with a whiter clue! 250  
O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries,  
The tyrant, not the father of the skies!  
Unpit-ous of the race thy will began!  
The fool of fate, thy manufacture, man,

## B. XX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 131

With penury, contempt, repulse, and care, 255  
The galling load of life is doom'd to bear.  
Ulysses from his state a wand'rer still,  
Upbraids thy pow'r, thy wisdom, or thy will:  
O monarch ever dear — O man of wo —  
Fresh flow my tears, and shall for ever flow! 260  
Like thee, poor stranger-guest, deny'd his home!  
Like thee, in rags obscene decreed to roam!  
Or haply perish'd on some distant coast,  
In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!  
O, grateful for the good his bounty gave, 265  
I'll grieve, till sorrow sink me to the grave!  
His kind protecting hand my youth prefer'd,  
The regent of his Cephallenian herd:  
With vast increase beneath my care it spreads,  
A stately breed! and blackens far the meads. 170  
Constrain'd, the choicest beeves I thence import,  
To cram these cormorants that croud his court:  
Who in partition seek his realm to share;  
Nor human right, nor wrath divine revere.  
Since here resolv'd oppressive these reside, 275  
Contending doubts my anxious heart divide:  
Now to some foreign clime inclin'd to fly,  
And with the royal herd protection buy:  
Then, happier thoughts return the nodding scale,  
Light mounts despair, alternate hopes prevail: 280  
In op'ning prospects of ideal joy,  
My king returns; the proud usurpers die.  
To whom the chief: In thy capacious mind  
Since daring zeal with cool debate is join'd;  
Attend a deed already ripe in fate: 285  
Attest, Oh Jove! the truth I now relate!  
This sacred truth attest each genial pow'r,  
Who bless the board, and guard this friendly bow'r!  
Before you quit the dome (nor long delay)  
Thy wish produc'd in act, with pleas'd survey, 290

132 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XX.

Thy wond'ring eyes shall view : his rightful reign }  
By arms avow'd Ulysses shall regain, }  
And to the shades devote the suitor-train.

O Jove supreme! (the raptur'd swain replies),  
With deeds consummate soon the promis'd joys! 295  
These aged nerves, with new-born vigour strung,  
In that blest'd cause should emulate the young—  
Assents Eumæus to the pray'r address;  
And equal ardours fire his loyal breast.

Meantime the suitors urge the prince's fate, 300  
And deathful arts employ the dire debate :  
When in his airy tour, the bird of Jove  
Truſt'd with his sinewy pounce a trembling dove;  
Sinister to their hope! This omen ey'd  
Amphinomus, who thus presaging cry'd. 305

The Gods from force and fraud the prince defend;  
O peers! the sanguinary scheme suspend:  
Your future thought let fable fate employ;  
And give the present hour to genial joy.

From council straight th' assenting peerage ceast, 310  
And in the dome prepar'd the genial feast.

Disrob'd, their vests apart in order lay.  
Then all with speed succinct the victims slay:  
With sheep and shaggy goats the porkers bled,  
And the proud steer was on the marble spread. 315

With fire prepar'd they deal the morsels round,  
Wine rosy bright the brimming goblets crown'd,

By age Eumæus borne: the purple tide  
Melanthius from an ample jar supply'd :  
High canisters of bread Phœtius plac'd; 320  
And eager all devour the rich repast.

Dispos'd apart, Ulysses shares the treat!  
A trivet table, and ignobler seat,

The prince appoints; but to his fire assigns  
The tasteful inwards, and nectareous wines. 325



## **B.XX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 133**

Partake, my guest, (he cry'd), without controul  
The social feast, and drain the cheering bowl :  
Dread not the railer's laugh, nor ruffian's rage ;  
No vulgar roof protects thy honour'd age ;  
This dome a refuge to thy wrongs shall be, 330  
From my great fire too soon devolv'd to me !  
Your violence and scorn, ye suitors, cease,  
Lest arms avenge the violated peace.

Aw'd by the prince, so haughty, brave, and young,  
Rage gnaw'd the lip, amazement chain'd the tongue.  
Be patient, peers ! (at length Antinous cries) ; 336  
The threats of vain imperious youth despise :  
Would Jove permit the meditated blow,  
That stream of eloquence should cease to flow.

Without reply vouchsaf'd, Antinous ceas'd : 340  
Meanwhile the pomp of festival increas'd :  
By heralds rank'd, in marshal'd order move  
The city tribes, to pleas'd Apollo's grove :  
Beneath the verdure of which awful shade,  
The lunar hecatomb they grateful laid ; 345  
Partook the sacred feast, and ritual honour paid.

But the rich banquet in the dome prepar'd,  
(An humble side-board set), Ulysses shar'd.  
Observant of the prince's high benefit,  
His menial train attend the stranger-guest : 350  
Whom Pallas with unpard'ning fury fir'd,  
By lordly pride and keen reproach inspir'd.  
A Samian peer, more studious than the rest  
Of vice, who teen'd with many a dead-born jest ;  
And urg'd, for title to a consort queen, 355  
Unnumber'd acres, arable and green ;  
(Ctesippus nam'd) ; this lord Ulysses ey'd,  
And thus ourst out, inpossumate with pride.

The sentence I propose, ye peers, attend :  
Since due regard must wait the prince's friend, 360

# 134 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. BOOK

Let each a token of esteem bestow ;

This gift acquits the dear respect I owe ;

With which he nobly may discharge his feat,

And pay the menials for the master's treat.

He said ; and of the steer before him plac'd, 365

That finewy fragment at Ulysses cast,

Where to the pastern-bone, by nerves combin'd,

The well-horn'd foot indissolubly join'd ;

Which whizzing high, the wall unseemly sign'd.

The chief, indignant, grins a ghastly smile ; 370

Revenge and scorn within his bosom boil :

When thus the prince, with pious rage inflam'd :

Had not th' inglorious wound thy malice aim'd

Fall'n guiltless of the mark, my certain spear

Had made thee buy the brutal triumph dear : 375

Nor should thy fire, a queen his daughter boast ;

The suitor, now, had vanish'd in a ghost :

No more, ye lewd compeers, with lawless pow'r

Intrude my dome, my herds and flocks devour :

For genuine worth, of age mature to know, 380

My grape shall redden, and my harvest grow.

Or if each other's wrongs ye still support,

With rapes and riot to profane my court ;

What single arm with numbers can contend ?

On me let all your lifted swords descend, 385

And with my life such vile dishonours end.

A long cessation of discourse ensu'd,

By gentler Agelaus thus renew'd :

A just reproof, ye peers ! your rage restrain

From the protect'd guest, and menial train : 390

And, prince ! to stop the source of future ill,

Assent yourself, and gain the royal will.

Whilst hope prevail'd to see your fire restor'd,

Of right the queen refus'd a second lord.

But who so vain of faith, so blind to fate,

To think he still survives to claim the state ? 395

### **XXX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY: 135**

Now press the sov'reign dame with warm desire  
To wed, as wealth or worth her choice inspire:  
The lord selected to the nuptial joys,  
Far hence will lead the long contended prize: 400  
While in paternal pomp, with plenty blest'd,  
You reign, of this imperial dome possess'd.

Sage and serene Telemachus replies:  
By him at whose behest the thunder flies!  
And by the name on earth I most revere, 405  
By great Ulysses, and his woes I swear!  
(Who never must review his dear domain;  
Inroll'd, perhaps, in Pluto's dreary train);  
Whene'er her choice the royal dame avows,  
My bridal gifts shall load the future spouse: 410  
But from this dome my parent-queen to chase!—  
From me, ye Gods! avert such dire disgrace.

But Pallas clouds with intellectual gloom  
The suitors' souls, insensate of their doom!  
A mirthful frenzy seiz'd the fated croud; 415  
The roofs resound with causeless laughter loud:  
Floating in gore, portentous to survey!  
In each discolour'd vase the viands lay:  
Then down each cheek the tears spontaneous flow,  
And sudden sighs precede approaching wo. 420  
In vision rapt, the \* Hyperesian seer  
Uprose, and thus divin'd the vengeance near.

O race to death devote! with Stygian shade  
Each destin'd peer impending fates invade:  
With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drown'd; 425  
With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round:  
Thick swarms the spacious hall with howling ghosts,  
To people Orcus, and the burning coasts!  
Nor gives the sun his golden orb to roll,  
But universal night usurps the pole! 430

Yet warn'd in vain, with laughter loud elate  
The peers reproach the sure divine of fate;

\* Theoclymenus,

136 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XX

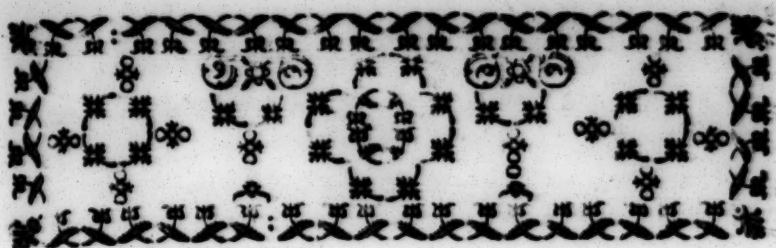
And thus Eurymachus: The dotard's mind  
To ev'ry sense is lost, to reason blind:  
Swift from the dome conduct the slave away; 435  
Let him in open air behold the day

Tax not, (the heav'n-illumin'd seer rejoin'd),  
Of rage, or folly, my prophetic mind.  
No clouds of error dim th' æthereal rays,  
Her equal pow'r each faithful sense obeys. 440  
Unguided hence my trembling steps I bend,  
Far hence, before yon hov'ring deaths descend;  
Lest, the ripe harvest of revenge begun,  
I share the doom ye suitors cannot shun.

This said, to sage Piræus sped the seer, 445  
His honour'd host, a welcome inmate there.  
O'er the protracted feast the suitors sit,  
And aim to wound the prince with pointless wit:  
Cries one, with scornful leer and mimic voice,  
Thy charity we praise, but not thy choice; 450  
Why such profusion of indulgence shown  
To this poor, tim'rous, toil detesting drone?  
That other feeds on planetary schemes,  
And pays his host with hideous noon-day dreams.  
But, prince! for once at least believe a friend, 455  
To some Sicilian mart these courtiers send,  
Where, if they yield their freight across the main,  
Dear sell the slaves! demand no greater gain.

Thus jovial they; but nought the prince replies;  
Full on his fire he roll'd his ardent eyes; 460  
Impatient straight to flesh his virgin-sword;  
From the wise chieft he waits the deathful word.  
Nigh in her bright alcove, the pensive queen  
To see the circle sat of all unseen.  
Sated at length they rise, and bid prepare 465  
An eve repast, with equal cost and care:  
But vengeful Pallas, with preventing speed,  
A feast proportion'd to their crimes decreed;  
A feast of death! the feasters doom'd to bleed! }





T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XXI.

THE A R G U M E N T.

The bending of Ulysses's bow.

*Penelope, to put an end to the solicitation of the suitors, proposes to marry the person who shall first bend the bow of Ulysses, and shoot through the ringlets. After their attempts have proved ineffectual, Ulysses, taking Eumæus and Philætius apart, discovers himself to them; then returning, desires leave to try his strength at the bow, which though refused with indignation by the suitors, Penelope and Telemachus cause it to be delivered to his hands. He bends it immediately, and shoots through all the rings. Jupiter in the same instant thunders from heaven; Ulysses accepts the omen, and gives a sign to Telemachus, who stands ready armed at his side.*

**A**ND Pallas now, to raise the rivals fires,  
With her own art Penelope inspires:  
Who now can bend Ulysses' bow, and wing  
The well-aim'd arrow through the distant ring.

138 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXL

Shall end the strife and win th' imperial dame; 3  
But discord and black death await the game!

The prudent queen the lofty stair ascends;  
At distance due a virgin train attends;  
A brazen key she held, the handle turn'd,  
With steel and polish'd elephant adorn'd: 10  
Swift to the inmost room she bent her way,  
Where safe repos'd the royal treasures lay;  
There shone high heap'd the labour'd brass and ore,  
And there the bow which great Ulysses bore.  
And there the quiver, where now guiltless slept 15  
Those winged deaths that many a matron wept.

This gift, long since when Sparta's shores he trod,  
On young Ulysses Iphitus bestow'd:  
Beneath Orsilochus's roof they met,  
One loss was private, one a public debt: 20  
Messena's state from Ithaca detains  
Three hundred sheep, and all the shepherd swains:  
And to the youthful prince to urge the laws,  
The king and elders trust their common cause.  
But Iphitus, employ'd on other cares, 25  
Search'd the wide country for his wand'ring mares,  
And mules, the strongest of the lab'ring kind;  
Hapless to search! more hapless still to find!  
For journeying on to Hercules at length,  
That lawless wretch, that man of brutal strength, 30  
Deaf to heav'n's voice, the social rite transgress;  
And for the beauteous mares destroy'd his guest.  
He gave the bow; and on Ulysses' part  
Receiv'd a pointed sword and missile dart:  
Of luckless friendship on a foreign shore 35  
Their first, last pledges! for they met no more.  
The bow bequeath'd by this unhappy hand;  
Ulysses bore not from his native land;  
Nor in the front of battle taught to bend,  
But kept, in dear memorial of his friend, 40

## B. XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 139

Now gently winding up the fair ascent,  
By many an easy step, the matron went;  
Then o'er the pavements glides with grace divine,  
(With polish'd oak the level pavements shine);  
The folding gates a dazzling light display'd, 45  
With pomp of various architrave o'erlaid.  
The bolt, obedient to the filken string,  
Forakes the staple as she pulls the ring;  
The wards respondent to the key turn round;  
The bars fall back; the flying valves resound; 50  
Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring,  
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the spring.  
She moves majestic through the wealthy room,  
Where treasur'd garments cast a rich perfume:  
There from the column where aloft it hung, 55  
Reach'd, in its splendid case, the bow unstrung:  
Across her knees she laid the well known bow,  
And pensive sat, and tears began to flow.  
To full satiety of grief she mourns;  
Then silent, to the joyous hall returns, 60  
To the proud suitors bears in pensive state  
Th' unbended bow, and arrows wing'd with fate.  
Behind, her train the polish'd coffer brings,  
Which held th' alternate brass and silver rings,  
Full in the portal the chaste queen appears, 65  
And with her veil conceals the coming tears:  
On either side awaits a virgin fair;  
While thus the matron with majestic air.  
Say you, whom these forbidden walls inclose,  
For whom my victims bleed, my vintage flows; 70  
If these neglected, faded charms can move?  
Or is it but a vain pretence, you love?  
If I the prize, if me you seek to wife,  
Hear the conditions, and commence the strife.  
Who first Ulysses' wondrous bow shall bend, 75  
And through twelve ringlets the fleet arrow send,

140 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI

Him will I follow, and forsake my home,  
For him forsake this lov'd, this wealthy dome,  
Long, long the scene of all my past delight,  
And still to last, the vision of my night !

80

Graceful she said, and bade Eumæus show  
The rival peers the ringlets and the bow.  
From his full eyes the tears unbidden spring,  
Touch'd at the dear memorials of his king.  
Philæus too relents, but secret shed

85

The tender drops. Antinous saw, and said.

Hence to your fields, ye rustics ! hence away,  
Nor stain with grief the pleasures of the day ;  
Nor to the royal heart recall in vain  
The sad remembrance of a perish'd man.  
Enough her precious tears already flow——  
Or share the feast with due respect, or go  
To weep abroad, and leave to us the bow :  
No vulgar task ! Ill suits this courtly crew  
That stubborn horn which brave Ulysses drew.

90

}

95

I well remember (for I gaz'd him o'er  
While yet a child) what majesty he bore !  
And still (all infant as I was) retain  
The port, the strength, the grandeur of the man.

He said, but in his soul fond joys arise,  
And his proud hopes already win the prize.  
To speed the flying shaft through ev'ry ring,  
Wretch ! is not thine ! the arrows of the king  
Shall end those hopes, and fate is on the wing !

100

}

105

Then thus Telemachus : Some God I find  
With pleasing frenzy has possess'd my mind ;  
When a lov'd mother threatens to depart,  
Why with this ill-tim'd gladness beats my heart ?  
Come then, ye suitors ! and dispute a prize  
Richer than all th' Achaian state supplies,  
Than all proud Argos or Mycæna knows,  
Than all our isles or continents inclose :

110



## **XXXI HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 141**

A woman matchless, and almost divine,  
Fit for the praise of ev'ry tongue but mine.  
No more excuses then, no more delay; 115  
Haste to the trial——Lo! I lead the way.

I too may try, and if this arm can wing  
The feather'd arrow through the destin'd ring,  
Then if no happier knight the conquest boast,  
I shall not sorrow for a mother lost; 120  
But blest'd in her, possess these arms alone,  
Heir of my father's strength, as well as throne.

He spoke; then rising, his broad sword unbound,  
And cast his purple garment on the ground.  
A trench he open'd; in a line he plac'd 125  
The level axes, and the points made fast  
(His perfect skill the wond'ring gazers ey'd,  
The game as yet unseen, as yet untry'd).  
Then, with a manly pace, he took his stand;  
And grasp'd the bow, and twang'd it in his hand. 130  
Three times, with beating heart, he made assay;  
Three times, unequal to the task, gave way:  
A modest boldness on his cheek appear'd:  
And thrice he hop'd, and thrice again he fear'd.  
The fourth had drawn it. The great sire with joy  
Beheld, but with a sign forbade the boy. 136  
His ardour straight th' obedient prince suppress'd,  
And artful, thus the suitor train address'd.

Oh lay the cause on youth yet immature!  
(For heav'n forbid, such weakness should endure). 140  
How shall this arm, unequal to the bow,  
Retort an insult, or repel a foe?  
But you! whom heav'n with better nerves has blest,  
Accept the trial, and the prize contest.

He cast the bow before him, and apart 145  
Against the polish'd quiver propt the dart.  
Resuming then his seat, Epirheus' son  
The bold Antinous, to the rest begun.

142 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI

" From where the goblet first begins to flow,  
 " From right to left, in order take the bow; 150  
 " And prove your several strengths." — The princes  
 heard;

And first Leiodes, blameless priest, appear'd;  
 The eldest born of Oenops' noble race,  
 Who next the goblet held his holy place:  
 He, only he, of all the suitor throng, 155

Their deeds detested, and abjur'd the wrong.  
 With tender hands the stubborn horn he strains,  
 The stubborn horn resisted all his pains!  
 Already in despair he gives it o'er:

Take it who will, (he cries), I strive no more. 160  
 What numerous deaths attend this fatal bow?  
 What souls and spirits shall it find below?

Better indeed to die, and fairly give  
 Nature her debt, than disappointed live,  
 With each new sun to some new hope a prey, 165  
 Yet still to morrow slier than to day.

How long in vain Penelope we fought?  
 This bow shall ease us of that idle thought,  
 And send us with some humbler wife to live,  
 Whom gold shall gain, or destiny shall give. 170

Thus speaking, on the floor the bow he plac'd,  
 (With rich inlay the various floor was grac'd);  
 At distance far the feather'd shaft he throws,  
 And to the seat returns from whence he rose.

To him Antinous thus with fury said 175  
 What words ill-omen'd from thy lips have fled?  
 Thy coward function ever is in fear;  
 Those arms are dreadful which thou canst not bear.

Why should this bow be fatal to the brave,  
 Because the priest is born a peaceful slave? 180  
 Mark then what others can — He ended there,  
 And bad Melanthius a vast pile prepare;

## **B XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 143**

He gives it instant flame : then fast beside  
Spreads o'er an ample board a bullock's hide.  
With melted lard they soak the weapon o'er, 185

Chafe ev'ry knot, and supple ev'ry pore.  
Vain all their art, and all their strength as vain ;  
The bow inflexible resists their pain.

The force of great Eurymachus alone  
And bold Antinous, yet untry'd, unknown : 190  
Those only now remain'd ; but those confess  
Of all the train the mightiest and the best.

Then from the hall, and from the noisy crew,  
The matters of the herd and flock withdrew.

The king observes them : he the hall forsakes, 195

And, past the limits of the court, o'ertakes,  
Then thus with accent mild Ulysses spoke :  
Ye faithful guardians of the herd and flock !

Shall I the secret of my breast conceal,  
Or (as my soul now dictates) shall I tell? 200

Say, should some fav'ring God restore again

The lost Ulysses to his native reign?

How beat your hearts? what aid would you afford?

To the proud suitors, or your antient lord?

Philæti thus : Oh were thy word not vain ! 205

Would mighty Jove restore that man again !

These aged sinews with new vigour strung  
In his blest'd cause should emulate the young.

With equal vows Eumæus too implor'd

Each power above, with wishes for his lord. 210

He saw their secret souls, and thus began.

Those vows the Gods accord : behold the man !

Your own Ulysses ! twice ten years detain'd

By woes and wand'rings from this hapless land :

At length he comes ; but comes despis'd, unknown, 215

And finding faithful you, and you alone.

All else have cast him from their very thought,

Ev'n in their wishes, and their pray'rs forgot !

144 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI.

Hear then, my friends If Jove this arm succeed,  
 And give yon impious revellers to bleed, 220  
 My care shall be, to bless your future lives  
 With large possessions, and with faithful wives;  
 Fast by my palace shall your domes ascend,  
 And each on young Telemachus attend,  
 And each be call'd his brother, and my friend 225  
 To give you firmer faith, now trust your eye:  
 Lo! the broad scar indented on my thigh,  
 When with Autolycus's sons, of yore,  
 On Parnass' top I chas'd the tusky boar.

His ragged vest then drawn aside disclos'd 230  
 The sign conspicuous and the scar expos'd:  
 Eager they view'd; with joy they stood amaz'd;  
 With tearful eyes o'er all their master gaz'd:  
 Around his neck their longing arms they cast,  
 His head, his shoulders, and his knees embrac'd: 235  
 Tears follow'd tears; no word was in their pow'r:  
 In solemn silence tell the kindly show'r  
 The king too weeps, the king too grasps their hands,  
 And moveless, as a marble fountain stands.

I thus had their joy wept down the setting sun; 240  
 But first the wise man ceas'd, and thus begun.  
 Enough——on other cares your thought employ,  
 For danger waits on all untimely joy.  
 Full many foes, and fierce, observe us near:  
 Some may betray, and yonder walls may hear. 245  
 Re-enter then, not all at once, but stay  
 Some moments you, and let me lead the way.  
 To me, neglected as I am, I know  
 The haughty suitors will deny the bow;  
 But thou, Eumæus, as 'tis borne away, 250  
 Thy master's weapon to his hand convey.  
 At ev'ry portal let some matron wait,  
 And each lock fast the well compacted gate:



## B. XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 145

Close let them keep, whate'er invades their ear;  
Tho' arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear. 255  
To thy strict charge, Philæti<sup>us</sup> we consign  
The court's main gate : to guard that pass be thine.

This said, he first return'd : the faithful swains  
At distance follow, as their king ordains.  
Before the flame Eurymachus now stands, 260  
And turns the bow, and chafes it with his hands:  
Still the tough bow unmov'd. The lofty man  
Sigh'd from his mighty soul and thus began.

I mourn the common cause : for, oh my friends!  
On me, on all, what grief, what shame attends? 265  
Not the lost nuptials can affect me more,  
(For Greece has beauteous dames on ev'ry shore) ;  
But baffled thus ! confess'd so far below  
Ulysses' strength as not to bend his bow !  
How shall all ages our attempt deride ! 270  
Our weakness scorn ! Antinous thus reply'd.  
Not so, Eurymachus : that no man draws  
The wondrous bow, attend another cause.  
Sacred to Phœbus is the solemn day,  
Which thoughtless we in games would waste away : 275  
Till the next dawn this ill tim'd strife forego,  
And here leave fix'd the ringlets in a row.  
Now bid the sew'r approach, and let us join  
In due libations, and in rites divine ;  
So end our night : before the day shall spring, 280  
The choicest off'rings let Melanthius bring :  
Let then to Phœbus' name the fatted thighs  
Feed the rich smokes, high curling to the skies.  
So shall the patron of these arts bestow  
(For his the gift) the skill to bend the bow. 285  
They heard well pleas'd the ready heralds bring  
The cleansing waters from the limpid spring :  
The goblet high with rosy wine they crown'd,  
In order circling to the peers around.

146 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI.

That rite compleat, uprose the thoughtful man, 290  
And thus his meditated scheme began,

If what I ask your noble minds approve,  
Ye peers and rivals in the royal love!  
Chief, if it hurt not great Antinous' ear,  
(Whose sage decilion I with wonder hear), 295

And if Eurymachus the motion please;  
Give heav'n this day, and rest the bow in peace.  
To morrow let your arms dispute the prize,  
And take it he, the favour'd of the skies!  
But since till then this trial you delay, 300

Trust it one moment to my hands to day:  
Fain would I prove, before your judging eyes,  
What once I was, whom wretched you despise;  
If yet this arm its ancient force retain;  
Or if my woes, (a long continued train), 305 }  
And wants, and insults, make me less than man.

Rage flash'd in lightning from the suitors' eyes,  
Yet mix'd with terror at the bold emprise.

Antinous then; O miserable guest!  
Is common sense quite banish'd from thy breast? 310  
Suffic'd it not within the palace plac'd

To sit distinguish'd, with our presence grac'd,  
Admitted here with princes to confer,

A man unknown, a needy wanderer?  
To copious wine this insolence we owe, 315

And much thy betters wine can overthrow:

The great Eurytion when this frenzy stung,  
Pirithous' roots with frantic riot rung:

Boundless the Centaur rag'd; till one and all  
The heroes rose, and dragg'd him from the hall; 320

His nose they shorten'd, and his ears they slit,  
And sent him sober'd home, with better wit.

Hence with long war the double race was curst,  
Fatal to all, but to th' aggressor first.

## B. XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 147

Such fate I prophesy our guest attends, 325

If here this interdicted bow he bends:

Nor shall these walls such insolence contain;

The first far wind transports him o'er the main;

Where Echetus to death the guilty brings,

(The worst of mortals, ev'n the worst of kings). 330

Better than that, if thou approve our cheer,

Cease the mad strife, and share our bounty here.

To this the queen her just dislike express,

'Tis impious, prince to harm the stranger guest,

Base to insult who bears a suppliant's name, 335

And some respect Telemachus may claim.

What if th' immortals on the man bestow

Sufficient strength to draw the mighty bow?

Shall I, a queen, by rival chiefs ador'd,

Accept a wand'ring stranger for my lord? 340

A hope so idle never touch'd his brain:

Then ease your bosoms of a tear so vain.

Far be he banish'd from this stately scene,

Who wrongs his princess with a thought so mean.

O fair! and wisest of so fair a kind! 345

(Respectful thus Eurymachus rejoind):

Mov'd by no weak surmise, but sense of shame,

We dread the all arraighing voice of fame;

We dread the censure of the meanest slave,

The weakest woman: all can wrong the brave. 350

"Behold what wretches to the bed pretend

"Of that brave chief whose bow they could not bend!

"In came a beggar of the strolling crew,

"And did what all those princes could not do."

Thus will the common voice our deed defame, 355

And thus posterity upbraid our name.

To whom the queen: If fame engage your views,

Forbear those acts which infamy pursues;

Wrong and oppression no renown can raise;

Know, friend! that virtue is the path to praise. 360

148 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI.

The stature of our guest, his port, his face,  
 Speak him descended from no vulgar race.  
 To him the bow, as he desires, convey;  
 And to this hand if Phœbus give the day,  
 Hence, to reward his merit, he shall bear  
 A two-edg'd faulchion and a shining spear,  
 Embroider'd sandals, a rich cloak and vest,  
 And safe conveyance to his port of rest.

365

O royal mother ever honour'd name!  
 Permit me (cries Telemachus) to claim  
 A son's just right. No Grecian prince but I  
 Has pow'r this bow to grant, or to deny.  
 Of all that Ithaca's rough hills contain,  
 And all wide Elis' courser breeding plain,  
 To me alone my father's arms descend;  
 And mine alone they are, to give or lend.  
 Retire, oh queen! thy household task resume,  
 Tend, with thy maids, the labours of the loom;  
 The bow, the darts, and arms of chivalry,  
 These cares to man belong, and most to me.

370

375

380

Mature beyond his years, the queen admir'd  
 His sage reply, and with her train retir'd;  
 There in her chamber as she sat apart,  
 Revolv'd his words, and plac'd them in her heart.  
 On her Ulysses then she fix'd her soul,  
 Down her fair cheek the tears abundant roll,  
 Till gentle Pallas, piteous of her cries,  
 In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.

585

Now thro' the press the bow Eumæus bore,  
 And all was riot, noise, and wild uproar.  
 Hold, lawless rustic! whither wilt thou go?  
 To whom, insensate, dost thou bear the bow?  
 Exil'd for this to some sequester'd den,  
 Far from the sweet society of men,  
 To thy own dogs a prey thou shalt be made;  
 If heav'n and Phœbus lend the suitors aid.

390

395



# **B. XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 149**

Thus they. Aghast he laid the weapon down,  
 But bold Telemachus thus urg'd him on:  
 Proceed, false slave, and slight their empty words;  
 What! hopes the fool to please so many lords? 400  
 Young as I am, thy prince's vengeful hand,  
 Stretch'd forth in wrath, shall drive thee from the land.  
 Oh! could the vigour of this arm as well  
 Th' oppressive suitors from my walls expel!  
 Then what shoals of lawless men should go 405  
 To fill with tumult the dark courts below!

The suitors with a scornful smile survey  
 The youth, indulging in the genial day.  
 Eumæus, thus encourag'd, hastes to bring  
 The strifeful bow, and gives it to the king. 410  
 Old Euryclea calling them aside,  
 Hear what Telemachus enjoins, (he cry'd):  
 At ev'ry portal let some matron wait,  
 And each lock fast the well compacted gate;  
 And if unusual sounds invade their ear, 415  
 If arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear,  
 Let none to call or issue forth presume,  
 But close attend the labours of the loom.

Her prompt obedience on his order waits;  
 Clos'd in an instant were the palace gates. 420  
 In the same moment forth Philætiús flies,  
 Secures the court, and with a cable ties  
 The utmost gate; (the cable strongly wrought  
 Of Byblos' reed, a ship from Egypt brought);  
 Then unperceiv'd and silent at the board 425  
 His seat he takes, his eyes upon his lord.

And now his well known bow the master bore,  
 Turn'd on all sides, and view'd it o'er and o'er;  
 Lest time or worms had done the weapon wrong,  
 Its owner absent, and untry'd so long. 430  
 While some deriding:—How he turns the bow!  
 Some other like it sure the man must know,

150 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXI.

Or else would copy; or in bows he deals;  
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals. —

Heav'n to this wretch (another cry'd) be kind! 435 }  
And bless, in all to which he stands inclin'd,  
With such good fortune as he now shall find. }

Heedless he heard them; but disdain'd reply;  
The bow perusing with exactest eye.

Then, as some heav'nly minstrel, taught to sing, 440  
High notes responsive to the trembling string,

To some new strain when he adapts the lyre,  
Or the dumb lute refits with vocal wire,

Relaxes, strains, and draws them to and fro;  
So the great master drew the mighty bow: 445

And drew with ease. One hand aloft display'd  
The bending horns, and one the string assay'd.

From his assaying hand the string let fly,

Twang'd short and sharp, like the shrill swallow's cry.

A general horror ran thro' all the race, 450

Sunk was each heart, and pale was ev'ry face.

Signs from above ensu'd: th' unfolding sky

In lightning burst: Jove thunder'd from on high.

Fir'd at the call of heav'n's almighty Lord,

He snatch'd the shaft that glitter'd on the board: 455

(Fast by, the rest lay sleeping in the sheath,

But soon to fly the messengers of death).

Now sitting as he was, the cord he drew,

Thro' ev'ry ringlet levelling his view;

Then notch'd the shaft, releas'd, and gave it wing; 460 }

The whizzing arrow vanish'd from the string, }

Sung on direct, and threaded ev'ry ring.

The solid gate its fury scarcely bounds;

Pierc'd thro' and thro', the solid gates resounds.

Then to the prince: Nor have I wrought thee shame;

Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim; 466

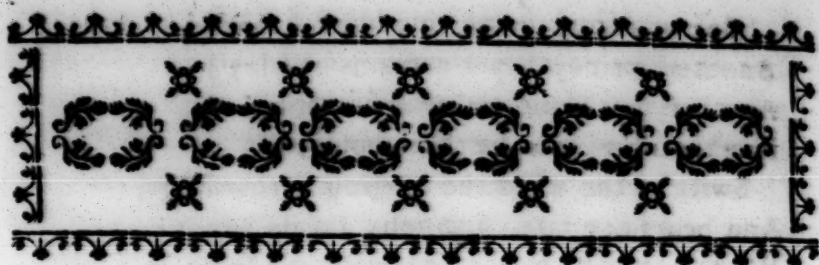
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I lost

That ancient vigour, once my pride and boast.

B. XXI. HOMER'S ODYSSEY .151

All I deserv'd these haughty peers' disdain ;  
Now let them comfort their dejected train, 470  
In sweet repast the present hour employ,  
Nor wait till evening for the genial joy :  
Then to the lute's soft voice prolong the night ;  
Music, the banquet's most refin'd delight.

He said ; then gave a nod ; and at the word 475  
Telemachus girds on his shining sword.  
Fast by his father's side he takes his stand ;  
The beamy jav'lin lightens in his hand.



T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XXII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The death of the suitors.

*Ulysses begins the slaughter of the suitors by the death of Antinous. He declares himself, and lets fly his arrows at the rest. Telemachus assists, and brings arms for his father, himself, Eumæus, and Philætius. Melanthius does the same for the wooers. Minerva encourages Ulysses in the shape of Mentor. The suitors are all slain, only Medon and Phemius are spared. Melanthius and the unfaithful servants are executed. The rest acknowledge their master with all demonstrations of joy.*

**T**Hen fierce the hero o'er the threshold strode ;  
Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a God.  
Full in their face the lifted bow he bore,  
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable store ;  
Before his feet the rattling show'r her threw, 5  
And thus terrific, to the suitor crew.



## B. XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 153

One ven'trous game this hand has won to day;  
 Another, princes! yet remains to play;  
 Another mark our arrow must attain.  
 Phoebus assist! nor be the labour vain. 10

Swift as the word the parting arrow sings,  
 And bears thy fate, Antinous, on its wings:  
 Wretch that he was, of unprophetic soul!  
 High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl!  
 Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath; 15  
 Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:  
 For fate who fear'd amidst a feastful band?  
 And fate to numbers, by a single hand?  
 Full through his throat Ulysses' weapon past,  
 And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his last.  
 The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows, 21  
 A stream of gore burst spouting from his nose;  
 Grim in convulsive agonies he sprawls:  
 Before him spurn'd, the loaded table falls,  
 And spreads the pavement with a mingled flood 25  
 Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.  
 Amaz'd, confounded, as they saw him fall,  
 Uprose the throngs tumultuous round the hall;  
 O'er all the dome they cast a haggard eye;  
 Each look'd for arms: in vain; no arms were nigh: 30  
 Aim'st thou at princes! (all amaz'd they said):  
 Thy last of games unhappy hast thou play'd;  
 Thy erring shaft has made our bravest bleed;  
 And death, unlucky guest, attends thy deed.  
 Vultures shall tear thee.—Thus incens'd they spoke, 35  
 While each to chance ascrib'd the wondrous stroke,  
 Blind as they were; for death ev'n now invades  
 His destin'd prey, and wraps them all in shades.  
 Then grimly frowning with a dreadful look,  
 That wither'd all their hearts, Ulysses spoke. 40

Dogs! ye have had your day; ye fear'd no more  
 Ulysses vengeful from the Trojan shore;

154 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

While to your lust and spoil a guardless prey,  
 Our house, our wealth, our helpless handmaids lay:  
 Not so content, with bolder frenzy fir'd, 45  
 I've to our bed presumptuous you aspir'd:  
 Laws or divine or human fail'd to move,  
 Or shame of men, or dread of Gods above;  
 Heedless alike of infamy or praise,  
 Or fame's eternal voice in future days: 50  
 The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,  
 Impending fate is yours, and instant doom.

Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the suitors stood,  
 From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood.  
 Trembling they sought their guilty heads to hide, 55  
 Alone the bold Eurymachus reply'd.

If, as thy words import (he thus began)  
 Ulysses lives, and thou the mighty man,  
 Great are thy wrongs, and much thou hast sustain'd  
 In thy spoil'd palace, and exhausted land; 60  
 The cause and author of those guilty deeds,  
 Lo! at thy feet unjust Antinous bleeds.  
 Not love, but wild ambition was his guide;  
 To slay thy son, thy kingdoms to divide,  
 These were his aims; but juster Jove deny'd. 65  
 Since cold in death th' offender lies, oh spare  
 Thy suppliant people, and receive their pray'r!  
 Brass, gold, and treasures shall the spoil defray  
 Two hundred oxen ev'ry prince shall pay:  
 The waste of years refunded in a day. 70  
 Till then thy wrath is just. — Ulysses burn'd  
 With high disdain, and sternly thus return'd.

All, all the treasures that enrich'd our throne  
 Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,  
 If offer'd, vainly should for mercy call: 75  
 'Tis you that offer, and I scorn them all:  
 Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,  
 Till pale as yonder wretch each suitor lies.

## XXXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 155

Hence with those coward terms; or fight, or fly;  
This choice is left ye, to resist or die; 80

And die I trust ye shall.—He sternly spoke:  
With guilty fears the pale assembly shook.

Alone Eurymachus exhorts the train:

Yon archer, comrades, will not shoot in vain;  
But from the threshold shall his darts be sped, 85  
(Whoe'er he be) till ev'ry prince lie dead.

Be mindful of yourselves, draw forth your swords,  
And to his shafts obtend these ample boards,

(So need compells). Then all united drive  
The bold invader from his post to drive; 90

The city rous'd shall to our rescue haste,  
And this mad archer soon have shoot his last.

Swift as he spoke, he drew his traitor sword,

And like a lion rush'd against his lord:

The wary chief the rushing foe repress, 95

Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breast:

His failing hand deserts the lifted sword,

And prone he falls extended o'er the board!

Before him wide, in mix'd effusion roll

Th'untasted viands, and the jovial bowl. 100

Full through his liver pass'd the shining wound,

With dying rage his forehead beats the ground;

He spurn'd the seat with fury as he fell,

And the fierce soul to darkness div'd, and hell.

Next bold Amphinomus his arm extends 105

To force the pass: the godlike man defends.

Thy spear, Telemachus! prevents th' attack,

The brazen weapon driving through his back.

Thence through his breast its bloody passage tore; }  
Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor, 110 }

And his crush'd forehead marks the stone with gore.

He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear

The long incumbrance of the weighty spear

156 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

To the fierce foe advantage might afford,  
 To rush between, and use the shorten'd sword. 115  
 With speedy ardour to his fire he flies,  
 And, Arm, great father! arm (in haste he cries):  
 Lo, hence I run for other arms to wield,  
 For missile jav'lins, and for helm and shield;  
 Fast by our side let either faithful swain 120  
 In arms attend us, and their part sustain.

Haste and return (Ulysses made reply),  
 While yet th'auxiliar shafts this hand supply;  
 Lest thus alone, encounter'd by an host,  
 Driv'n from the gate, th' important pass be lost. 125

With speed Telemachus obeys, and flies  
 Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;  
 Four brazen helmets, eight retulgent spears,  
 And four broad bucklers, to his fire he bears:  
 At once in brazen Panoply they shone, 130  
 At once each servant brac'd his armour on;  
 Around their king a faithful guard they stand,  
 While yet each shaft flew deathful from his hand:  
 Chief after chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,  
 And swell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground. 135  
 Soon as his store of flying fates was spent,  
 Against the wall he set the bow unbent:  
 And now his shoulders bear the massy shield,  
 And now his hands two beamy jav'lins wield:  
 He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd  
 O'er the high crest, and cast a dreadful shade. 141

There stood a window near, whence looking down  
 From o'er the porch, appear'd the subject town.  
 A double strength of valves secur'd the place,  
 A high and narrow, but the only pass: 145  
 The cautious king, with all-preventing care,  
 To guard that outlet, plac'd Eumæus there.  
 When Agelaus thus: Has none the sense  
 To mount yon window, and alarm from thence



## XXXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 157

The neighbour town? the town shall force the door,  
And this bold archer soon shall shoot no more. 151

Melanthius then: That outlet to the gate  
So near adjoins, that one may guard the strait.  
But other methods of defence remain,  
Myself with arms can furnish all the train; 155  
Stores from the royal magazine I bring,  
And their own darts shall pierce the prince and king.

He said; and mounting up the lofty stairs,  
Twelve shields, twelve lances and twelve helmets bears:  
All arm, and sudden round the hall appears 160  
A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of spears.

The hero stands oppress'd with mighty wo,  
On ev'ry side he sees the labour grow:  
Oh curs'd event! and oh unlook'd for aid!  
Melanthius or the women have betray'd—— 165  
Oh my dear son!——The father with a sigh!  
Then ceas'd. The filial virtue made reply.

Falseness is folly, and 'tis just to own  
The fault committed: this was mine alone;  
My haste neglected yonder door to bar, 170  
And hence the villain has supply'd their war.  
Run, good Eumæus, then, and (what before  
I thoughtless err'd in) well secure that door:  
Learn if by female fraud this deed was done,  
Or (as my thought misgives) by Dolius' son. 175

While yet they spoke, in quest of arms again  
To the high chamber stole the faithless swain;  
Not unobserv'd. Eumæus watchful ey'd,  
And thus address'd Ulysses near his side.

The miscreant we suspected takes that way: 180  
Him, if this arm be pow'rful, shall I slay?  
Or drive him hither, to receive the meed,  
From thy own hand, of this detested deed?

Not so (reply'd Ulysses) leave him there;  
For us sufficient is another care: 185

# 158 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII

Within the stricture of this palace wall  
 To keep inclos'd his masters till they fall.  
 Go you and seize the felon ; backward bind  
 His arm and legs, and fix a plank behind ;  
 On this his body by strong cords extend,  
 And on a column near the roof suspend ;  
 So study'd tortures his vile days shall end.

190 }

The ready swains obey'd with joyful haste ;  
 Behind the felon unperceiv'd they past,  
 As round the room in quest of arms he goes :  
 (The half-shut door conceal'd his lurking foes).  
 One hand sustain'd a helm, and one the shield  
 Which old Laertes wont in youth to wield,  
 Cover'd with dust, with dryness chapt and worn,  
 The brass corroded, and the leather torn :  
 Thus laden, o'er the threshold as he stept,  
 Fierce on the villain from each side they leapt ;  
 Back by the hair the trembling dastard drew,  
 And down reluctant on the pavement threw.

195

Active and pleas'd, the zealous swains fulfil  
 At ev'ry point their master's rigid will :  
 First, fast behind, his hands and feet they bound,  
 Then strengthen'd cords involv'd his body round :  
 So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,

200

205

The howling felon swung from side to side.

210

Eumæus scoffing then with keen disdain :  
 There pass thy pleasing night, oh gentle swain !  
 On that soft pillow, from that envy'd height  
 First mayst thou see the springing dawn of light ;  
 So timely rise, when morning streaks the east,  
 To drive thy victims to the suitors feast.

215

This said, they left him, tortur'd as he lay,  
 Secur'd the door, and hasty strode away :  
 Each, breathing death, resum'd his dang'rous post  
 Near great Ulysses ; four against an host.

220

## B. XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 159

When lo! descending to her hero's aid,  
Jove's daughter Pallas, war's triumphant maid:  
In Mentor's friendly form she join'd his side;  
Ulysses saw, and thus with transport cry'd.

Come, ever welcome, and thy succour lend; 225  
Oh ev'ry sacred name in one! my friend!

Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown.  
Whate'er through life's whole series I have done  
Or good or grateful, now to mind recall,  
And aiding this one hour, repay it all. 230

Thus he; but pleasing hopes his bosom warm  
Of Pallas latent in the friendly form.

The adverse host the phantom warrior ey'd,  
And first, loud threat'ning, Agelaus cry'd.

Mentor, beware; nor let that tongue persuade, 235  
Thy frantic arm to lend Ulysses aid;

Our force successful shall our threat make good,  
And with the fire's and son's commix thy blood.  
What hop'st thou here? Thee first the sword shall slay,  
Then lop thy whole posterity away; 240

Far hence thy banish'd consort shall we send;  
With his thy forfeit lands and treasures blend;  
Thus, and thus only, shalt thou join thy friend. }

His barb'rous insult ev'n the Goddess fires,  
Who thus the warrior to revenge inspires. 145

Art thou Ulysses? where then shall we find  
The patient body and the constant mind?  
That courage, once the Trojans daily dread,  
Known nine long years, and felt by heroes dead?  
And where that conduct, which reveng'd the lust 250  
Of Priam's race, and laid proud Troy in dust?

If this, when Helen was the cause, were done;  
What for thy country now, thy queen, thy son?  
Rise then in combat, at my side attend:  
Observe what vigour gratitude can lend, 255  
And foes how weak, oppos'd against a friend! }

# 160 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

She spoke ; but willing longer to survey  
 The fire and son's great acts, with-held the day ;  
 By farther toils decreed the brave to try,  
 And level pois'd the wings of victory : 260  
 Then with a change of form eludes their fight  
 Perch'd like a swallow on a rafter's height,  
 And unperceiv'd enjoys the rising fight. }

Damastor's son, bold Agelaus, leads  
 The guilty war ; Eurynomus succeeds ; 265  
 With these Pisander, great Polyctor's son,  
 Sage Polybus, and stern Amphimedon,  
 With Demoptolemus : these six survive ;  
 The best of all the shafts had left alive.  
 Amidst the carnage desp'rate as they stand, 270  
 Thus Agelaus rous'd the lagging band.

The hour is come when yon fierce man no more  
 With bleeding princes shall bestrow the floor :  
 Lo ! Mentor leaves him with an empty boast :  
 The four remain, but four against an host. 275  
 Let each at once discharge the deadly dart,  
 One sure of six shall reach Ulysses' heart :  
 Thus shall one stroke the glory lost regain :  
 The rest must perish, their great leader slain.

Then all at once their mingled lances threw, 280  
 And thirsty all of one man's blood they flew ;  
 In vain ! Minerva turn'd them with her breath,  
 And scatter'd short, or wide, the points of death ;  
 With deaden'd sound, one on the threshold falls,  
 One strikes the gate, one rings against the walls ; 285  
 The storm pass'd innocent. The godlike man  
 Now loftier trod, and dreadful thus began.

'Tis now (brave friends) our turn, at once to throw  
 (So speed them heav'n ! ) our jav'lines at the foe.  
 That impious race to all their past misdeeds 290  
 Would add our blood. Injustice still proceeds.



## B. XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 161

He spake : at once their fiery lances flew :  
Great Demoptolemus, Ulysses flew ;  
Euryades receiv'd the prince's dart ;  
The goatherd's quiver'd in P'sander's heart ;      295  
Pierce Elatus by thine, Eumæus, falls ;

Their fall in thunder echoes round the walls.  
The rest retreat.    The victors now advance,  
Each from the dead resumes his bloody lance.  
Again the foe discharge the steely show'r ;      300  
Again made frustrate by the virgin pow'r.  
Some, turn'd by Pallas, on the threshold fall,  
Some wound the gate, some ring against the wall :  
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,  
Drop harmless, on the pavement sounding dead.      305

Then bold Amphemedon his jav'lin cast ;  
Thy hand, Telemachus, it lightly raz'd :  
And from Ctesippus' arm the spear elanc'd,  
On good Eumæus' shield and shoulder glanc'd ;  
Not lessen'd of their force (so slight the wound)      310  
Each sung along, and dropp'd upon the ground.  
Fate doom'd thee next, Eurydamus, to bear  
Thy death, ennobled by Ulysses' spear.  
By the bold son Amphimedon was slain ;  
And Polybus renown'd the faithful swain.      315  
Pierc'd through the breast the rude Ctesippus bled ;  
And thus Philæti's glory'd o'er the dead.

There end thy pompous vaunts and high disdain,  
Oh sharp in scandal, voluble and vain !  
How weak is mortal pride ! To heav'n alone      320  
Th' event of actions and our fates are known.  
Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear :  
The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear.

Ulysses brandish'd high his vengeful steel,  
And Damastorides that instant fell ;      325  
Fast by Leocritus expiring lay,  
The prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way

362 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

Through all his bowels : down he tumbles prone,  
His batter'd front and brains besmear the stone.

Now Pallas shines confest'd ; aloft she spreads 330

The arm of vengeance o'er their guilty heads ;

The dreadful ægis blazes in their eye ;

Amaz'd they see, they tremble, and they fly :

Confus'd, distract'd, through the rooms they fling } 335

Like oxen madden'd by the breeze's sting, }  
When sultry days, and long succeed the gentle spring.

Not half so keen, fierce vultures of the chase  
Stoop from the mountains on the feather'd race,

When the wide field extended snares beset,

With conscious dread they shun the quiv'ring net: 340

No help, no flight, but wounded ev'ry way,

Headlong they drop : the fowlers seize the prey.

On all sides thus they double wound on wound ;

In prostrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,

Unmanly shrieks precede each dying groan, 345

And a red deluge floats the reeking stone.

Leiodes first before the victor falls :

The wretched augur thus for mercy calls.

O gracious hear, nor let thy suppliant bleed :

Still undishonour'd or by word or deed 350

Thy house, for me, remains ; by me repress

Full oft was check'd th' injustice of the rest :

Averse they heard me when I counsell'd well,

Their hearts were harden'd, and they justly fell.

Oh spare an augur's consecrated head, 355

Nor add the blameless to the guilty dead.

Priest as thou art ! for that detested band.

Thy lying prophecies deceiv'd the land :

Against Ulysses have thy vows been made ;

For them thy daily orisons were paid : 360

Yet more, ev'n to our bed thy pride aspires :

One common crime one common fate requires.

## XXXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 163

Thus speaking, from the ground the sword he took  
Which Agelaus' dying hand forsook;  
Full through his neck the weightyaulchion sped : 365  
Along the pavement roll'd the mutt'ring head.

Phemius alone the hand of vengeance spar'd,  
Phemius the sweet, the heav'n instructed bard.  
Beside the gate the rev'rend minstrel stands;  
The lyre, now silent, trembling in his hands; 370  
Dubious to supplicate the chief, or fly  
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh,

Where oft Laertes holy vows had paid,  
And oft Ulysses smoaking victims laid.  
His honour'd harp with care he first set down, 375  
Between the laver and the silver throne ;  
Then prostrate stretch'd before the dreadful man,  
Persuasive, thus, with accent soft began.

O king ! to mercy be thy soul inclin'd,  
And spare the poet's ever gentle kind. 380

A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,  
For dear to Gods and men is sacred song.  
Self taught I sing : by heav'n, and heav'n alone,  
The genuine seeds of poetry are sown ;  
And (what the Gods bestow) the lofty lay, 385  
To Gods alone, and godlike worth, we pay.  
Save then the poet, and thyself reward ;

'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record.  
That here I sung, was force, and not desire ;  
This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire : 390  
And let thy son attest, nor sordid pay,  
Nor servile flatt'ry, stain'd the moral ray.

The moving words Telemachus attends,  
His fire approaches, and the bard defends.  
Oh mix not, father, with those impious dead 395  
The man divine ! forbear that sacred head.  
Medon the herald too our arms may spare,  
Medon, who made my infancy his care;

164 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

If yet he breathes, permit thy son to give  
Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live. 400

Beneath a table, trembling with dismay  
Couch'd close to earth, unhappy Medon lay,  
Wrapt in a new slain ox's ample hide:  
Swift at the word he cast his screen aside,  
Sprung to the prince, embrac'd his knee with tears, 405  
And thus with grateful voice address'd his ears.

O prince! O friend! lo here thy Medon stands;  
Ah stop the hero's unresisted hands,  
Incens'd too justly by that impious brood,  
Whose guilty glories now are set in blood. 410

To whom Ulysses with a pleasing eye:  
Be bold, on friendship and my son rely;  
Live, an example for the world to read,  
How much more safe the good than evil deed:  
Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace resort 415  
From blood and carnage to yon open court:  
Me other work requires — With tim'rous awe  
From the dire scene th' exempted two withdraw,  
Scarce sure of life, look round, and trembling move  
To the bright altars of Protector Jove. 420

Meanwhile Ulysses search'd the dome, to find  
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.  
Not one! complete the bloody tale he found,  
All steep'd in blood, all gasping on the ground.  
So, when by hollow shores the fisher train, 425  
Sweep with their arching nets the hoary main,  
And scarce the meshy toils the copious draught contain,

All naked of their element; and bare,  
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;  
Wide o'er the sands are spread the stiff'ning prey, 430  
Till the warm sun exhales their soul away.

And now the king commands his son to call  
Old Euryclea to the deathful hall;



**BXXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 165**

The son observant not a moment stays;  
The aged governess with speed obeys: 435  
The sounding portals instant they display;  
The matron moves, the prince directs the way.

On heaps of death the stern Ulysses stood,  
All black with dust, and cover'd thick with blood.  
So the grim lion from the slaughter comes, 440  
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foams,  
His breast with marks of carnage painted o'er,  
His jaws all drooping with the bull's black gore.

Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,  
The guilty fall'n, the mighty deed complete; 445  
A scream of joy her feeble voice assay'd:  
The hero check'd her, and compos'dly said.

Woman, experienc'd as thou art, controul  
Indecent joy, and feast thy secret soul,  
T' insult the dead is cruel and unjust; 450  
Fate, and their crime, have sunk them to the dust.  
Nor heeded these the censure of mankind,  
The good and bad were equal in their mind.  
Justly the price of worthlessness they paid,  
And each now wails an unlamented shade, 455  
But thou, sincere, oh Euryclea! say,  
What maids dishonour us, and what obey?

Then she: In these thy kingly walls remain  
(My son) full fifty of the handmaid train,  
Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave, 460  
And servitude with pleasing tasks deceive.  
Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way,  
Nor me nor chaste Penelope obey;  
Nor fits it that Telemachus command  
(Young as he is) his mother's female band. 465  
Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,  
Where slumbers soft now close the royal eye;  
There wake her with the news—the matron cry'd.  
Not so (Ulysses more sedate reply'd);

# 166 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXII.

Bring first the crew who wrought these guilty deeds; 470  
In haste the matron parts: the king proceeds.

Now to dispose the dead, the care remains  
To you, my son, and you, my faithful swains;  
Th' offending females to that task we doom,  
To wash, to scent, and purify the room 475  
These (ev'ry table cleans'd, and ev'ry throne,  
And all the melancholy labour done)  
Drive to yon court, without the palace-wall,  
There the revenging sword shall smite them all;  
So with the suitors let them mix in dust, 480  
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their lust.

He said: the lamentable train appear;  
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;  
Each heav'd her mournful burthen, and beneath  
The porch, depos'd the ghastly heaps of death. 485  
The chief severe, compelling each to move,  
Urg'd the dire task imperious from above.  
With thirsty sponge they rub the tables o'er,  
(The swains unite their toil); the walls, the floor, }  
Wash'd with th' effusive wave, are purg'd of gore. }  
Once more the palace set in fair array, 491

To the base court the females take their way;  
There compass'd close between the dome and wall,  
(Their life's last scene) they trembling wait their fall.

Then thus the prince: To these shall we afford 495  
A fate so pure, as by the martial sword;  
To these, the nightly prostitutes to shame,  
And base revilers of our house and name?

Thus speaking, on the circling wall he strung  
A ship's tough cable, from a column hung; 500  
Near the high top he strain'd it strongly round,  
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.  
Their heads above connected in a row,  
They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below.  
Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare, 505  
The doves or thrushes flap their wings in air.

## B. XXII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 167

Soon fled the soul impure, and left behind  
The empty corse to waver with the wind.

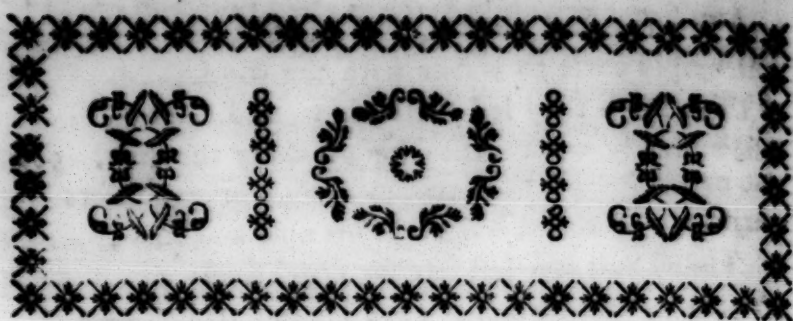
Then forth they led Melanthius, and began  
Their bloody work. they lopp'd away the man, 510  
Morfel for dogs ! then trimm'd with brazen sheers  
The wretch, and shorten'd of his nose and ears ;  
His hands and feet last felt the cruel steel :  
He roar'd, and torments gave his soul to hell——

They wash, and to Ulyss's take their way, 515  
So ends the bloody bus'ness of the day.

To Euryclea then address'd the king.  
Bring hither fire, and hither sulphur bring,  
To purge the palace : then the queen attend,  
And let her, with her matron train, descend ; 520  
The matron train, with all the virgin-band,  
Assemble here, to learn their lord's command.

Then Euryclea : Joyful I obey,  
But cast those mean dishonest rags away ;  
Permit me first thy royal robes to bring : 525  
Ill suits this garb the shoulders of a king.  
“ Bring sulphur straight and fire,” (the monarch cries).  
She hears, and at the word obedient flies.  
With fire and sulphur, cure of noxious fumes,  
He purg'd the walls and blood polluted rooms. 530  
Again the matron springs with eager pace,  
And spreads her lord's return from place to place.  
They hear, rush forth, and instant round him stand,  
A gazing throng, a torch in ev'ry hand.  
They saw, they knew him, and with fond embrace 535  
Each humbly kiss'd his knee, or hand, or face ;  
He knows them all ; in all such truth appears,  
Ev'n he indulges the sweet joy of tears.





T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.  
B O O K XXIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

*Euryclea awakens Penelope with the news of Ulysses's return and the death of the suitors. Penelope scarcely credits her, but supposes some God has punished them and descends from her apartment in doubt. At the first interview of Ulysses and Penelope, she is quite unsatisfied. Minerva restores him to the beauty of his youth; but the queen continues incredulous, till by some circumstances she is convinced, and falls into all the transports of passion and tenderness. They recount to each other all that has passed during their long separation. The next morning Ulysses, arming himself and his friends, goes from the city to visit his father.*

**T**Hen to the queen, as in repose she lay,  
The nurse, with eager rapture, speeds her way;  
The transports of her faithful heart supply  
A sudden youth, and gave her wings to fly.



## B. XXIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 169

And sleeps my child? the rev'rend matron cries : 5  
Ulysses lives! arise, my child, arise!

At length appears the long expected hour!

Ulysses comes! the suitors are no more!

No more they view the golden light of day;

Arise, and bless thee with the glad survey! 10

Touch'd at her words, the mournful queen rejoind,  
Ah! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind?

The righteous pow'rs who tread the starry skies,

The weak enlighten, and confound the wise,

And human thought, with unresisted sway, 15

Depress or raise, enlarge or take away:

Truth, by their high decree, thy voice forsakes,

And Folly with the tongue of Wisdom speaks.

Unkind, the fond illusion to impose!

Was it to flatter or deride my woes? 20

Never did I a sleep so sweet enjoy,

Since my dear lord left Ithaca for Troy:

Why must I wake to grieve, and curse thy shore,

O Troy?—may never tongue pronounce thee more!

Be gone: another might have felt our rage, 25

But age is sacred, and we spare thy age.

To whom with warmth: My soul a lie disdains;

Ulysses lives, thy own Ulysses reigns:

That stranger, patient of the suitors' wrongs,

And the rude licence of ungovern'd tongues, 30

He, he is thine! thy son, his latent guest

Long knew, but lock'd the secret in his breast;

With well concerted art to end his woes,

And burst at once in vengeance on the foes.

While yet she spoke, the queen in transport sprung  
Swift from the couch, and round the matron hung; 36

Fast from her eye descends the rolling tear,

Say, once more say, is my Ulysses here?

How could that num'rous and outrageous band

By one be slain, though by an hero's hand? 40

170 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIII.

I saw it not, she cries, but heard alone,  
 When death was busy, a loud dying groan;  
 The damsel train, turn'd pale at ev'ry wound,  
 Immur'd we sat, and catch'd each passing sound.  
 When death had seiz'd her prey, thy son attends, 45  
 And at his nod the damsel-train descends;  
 There terrible in arms Ulysses stood,  
 And the dead suitors almost swam in blood;  
 Thy heart had leap'd the hero to survey,  
 Stern as the surly lion o'er his prey, 50  
 Glorious in gore!—now with sulphureous fires  
 The dome he purges, now the flame aspires;  
 Heap'd lie the dead without the palace-walls—  
 Haste, daughter, haste, thy own Ulysses calls!  
 Thy ev'ry wish the bounteous Gods bestow, 55  
 Enjoy the present good, and former wo.  
 Ulysses lives his vanquish'd foes to see;  
 He lives to thy Telemachus and thee!

Ah no! with sighs Penelope rejoin'd,  
 Excess of joy disturbs thy wand'ring mind; 60  
 How blest'd this happy hour, should he appear,  
 Dear to us all, to me supremely dear!  
 Ah no! some God the suitors' deaths decreed,  
 Some God descends, and by his hand they bleed;  
 Blind! to condemn the stranger's righteous cause, 65  
 And violate all hospitable laws!  
 The good they hated, and the pow'rs defy'd;  
 But heav'n is just, and by a God they dy'd.  
 For never must Ulysses view this shore;  
 Never! the lov'd Ulysses is no more! 70

What words (the matron cries) have reach'd my ears?  
 Doubt we his presence, when he now appears?  
 Then hear conviction: Ere the fatal day  
 That forc'd Ulysses o'er the wat'ry way,  
 A boar fierce-rushing in the sylvan war 75  
 Plough'd half his thigh; I saw, I saw the scar.

## B. XXIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 171

And wild with transport had reveal'd the wound;  
But ere I spoke, he rose, and check'd the sound.  
Then, daughter, haste away! and if a lie  
Flow from this tongue, then let thy servant die! 80

To whom with dubious joy the queen replies:  
Wife is thy foul, but errors seize the wife;  
The works of Gods what mortal can survey?  
Who knows their motives? who shall trace their way?  
But learn w<sup>h</sup> instant how the suitors trod 85  
The paths of death, by man or by a God.

Thus speaks the queen, and no reply attends,  
But with alternate joy and fear descends;  
At ev'ry step debates, her lord to prove!  
Or rushing to his arms, confess her love! 90  
Then gliding through the marble valves in state,  
Oppos'd, before the shining fire she sat.  
The monarch, by a column high enthron'd,  
His eye withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;  
Curious to hear his queen the silence break: 95  
Amaz'd she sat, and impotent to speak;  
O'er all the man her eyes she rolls in vain,  
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.  
At length Telemachus:—Oh who can find  
A woman like Penelope unkind? 100

Why thus in silence? why with winning charms  
Thus slow to fly with rapture to his arms?  
Stubborn the breast that with no transport glows,  
When twice ten years are past of mighty woes:  
To softness lost, to spousal love unknown, 105  
The Gods have form'd that rigid heart of stone!

O my Telemachus! the queen rejoin'd,  
Distracting fears confound my lab'ring mind;  
Pow'rless to speak, I scarce uplift my eyes,  
Nor dare to question: doubts on doubts arise. 110  
Oh deign he, if Ulysses, to remove  
These boding thoughts, and what he is, to prove!

172 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIII.

Pleas'd with her virtuous fears, the king replies :  
 Indulge, my son, the cautions of the wife ;  
 Time shall the truth to sure remembrance bring : 115  
 This garb of poverty belies the king ;  
 No more — I his day our deepest care requires,  
 Cautious to act what thought mature inspires.  
 If one man's blood, though mean, distain our hands,  
 The homicide retreats to foreign lands ; 120  
 By us, in heaps, th' illustrious peerage falls,  
 Th' important deed our whole attention calls.

Be that thy care, Telemachus replies,  
 The world conspires to speak Ulysses' wife ;  
 For wisdom all is thine ! lo I obey, 125  
 And dauntless follow where you lead the way ;  
 Nor shalt thou in the day of danger find  
 Thy coward son degen'rate lag behind.

Then instant to the bath, (the monarch cries),  
 Bid the gay youth and sprightly virgins rise, 130  
 Thence all descend in pomp and proud array,  
 And bid the dome resound the mirthful lay ;  
 While the sweet lyrist airs of rapture sing,  
 And forms the dance responsive to the strings.  
 That hence th' eluded passengers may say, 135  
 Lo ! the queen weds ! we hear the spousal lay !  
 The suitors' death unknown, till we remove  
 Far from the court, and act inspir'd by Jove.

Thus spoke the king : th' observant train obey,  
 At once they bathe, and dress in proud array : 140  
 The lyrist strikes the string ; gay youths advance,  
 And fair zon'd damsels form the sprightly dance.  
 The voice, attun'd to instrumental sounds,  
 Ascends the roof ; the vaulted roof rebounds ;  
 Not unobserv'd : the Greeks eluded say, 145  
 Lo ! the queen weds ! we hear the spousal lay !  
 Inconstant ! to admit the bridal hour.  
 Thus they—but nobly chaste she weds no more.



## B. XXIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 173

Meanwhile the weary'd king the bath ascends ;  
With faithful cares Eurynome attends, 150  
O'er ev'ry limb a show'r of fragrance sheds :  
Then dress'd in pomp, magnificent he treads.  
The Warrior Goddess gives his frame to shine  
With majesty enlarg'd, and grace divine.  
Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly 155  
His thick large locks, of hyacinthine dye.  
As by some artist to whom Vulcan gives  
His heav'nly skill, a breathing image lives,  
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mold,  
And the pale silver glows with subtle gold : 160  
So Pallas his heroic form improves  
With bloom divine, and like a God he moves ;  
More high he treads, and issuing forth in state,  
Radiant before his gazing consort sat.  
And oh, my queen ! he cries ; what pow'r above 165  
Has steel'd that heart, averse to spousal love !  
Canst thou, Penelope, when heav'n restores  
Thy lost Ulysses to his native shores,  
Canst thou, oh cruel ! unconcern'd survey  
Thy lost Ulysses on this signal day ? 170  
Haste, Euryclea, and dispatchful spread  
For me, and me alone, th' imperial bed :  
My weary nature craves the balm of rest :  
But heav'n with adamant has arm'd her breast.

Ah no ! she cries, a tender heart I bear, 175  
A foe to pride ; no adamant is there :  
And now, ev'n now it melts ! for sure I see  
Once more Ulysses, my belov'd, in thee !  
Fix'd in my soul, as when he sail'd to Troy,  
His image dwells : then haste the bed of joy ! 180  
Haste, from the bridal bow'r the bed translate,  
Fram'd by his hand, and be it dress'd in state !

Thus speaks the queen, still dubious, with disguise ;  
Touch'd at her words, the king with warmth replies :

174 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIII.

Alas for this! what mortal strength can move 185  
 Th' enormous burthen; who but heav'n above?  
 It mocks the weak attempts of human hands;  
 But the whole earth must move, if heav'n commands.  
 Then hear sure evidence, while we display  
 Words seal'd with sacred truth, and truth obey: 190  
 This hand the wonder fram'd; an olive spread  
 Full in the court its ever-verdant head.  
 Vast as some mighty column's bulk, on high  
 The huge trunk rose, and heav'd into the sky;  
 Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r, 195  
 And root'd defensive of the storm and show'r;  
 The spacious valve, with art inwrought, conjoins;  
 And the fair dome with polish'd marble shines.  
 I lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain  
 Sever'd the bole, and smooth'd the shining grain; 200  
 Then posts, capacious of the frame, I raise,  
 And bore it, regular, from space to space:  
 Athwart the frame, at equal distance lie  
 Thongs of tough hides, that boast a purple dye;  
 Then polishing the whole, the finish'd mold 205  
 With silver shone, with elephant, and gold.  
 But if o'erturn'd by rude ungovern'd hands,  
 Or still inviolate the olive stands,  
 'Tis thine, oh queen, to say: and now impart,  
 If fears remain, or doubts distract thy heart? 210  
 While yet he speaks, her pow'rs of life decay,  
 She sickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:  
 At length recov'ring, to his arms she flew,  
 And strain'd him close, as to his breast she grew:  
 The tears pour'd down amain: and, Oh, she cries, 215  
 Let not against thy spouse thine anger rise!  
 O vers'd in ev'ry turn of human art,  
 Forgive the weakness of a woman's heart!  
 The righteous pow'rs that mortal lots dispose,  
 Decree us to sustain a length of woes; 220

B. XXIII. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 175

And from the flow'r of life, the bliss deny  
 To bloom together, fade away, and die.  
 O let me, let me not thine anger move,  
 That I forbore, thus, thus, to speak my love ;  
 Thus in fond kisses, while the transport warms, 225  
 Pour out my soul, and die within thy arms !  
 I dreaded fraud ! Men, faithless men, betray  
 Our easy faith, and make the sex their prey :  
 Against the fondness of my heart I strove,  
 'Twas caution, oh my lord ! not want of love : 230  
 Like me had Helen fear'd, with wanton charms  
 Ere the fair mischief set two worlds in arms,  
 Ere Greece rose dreadful in th' avenging day ;  
 Thus had she fear'd, she had not gone astray.  
 But heav'n, averse to Greece, in wrath decreed 235  
 That she should wander, and that Greece should bleed :  
 Blind to the ills that from injustice flow,  
 She colour'd all our wretched lives with wo.  
 But why these sorrows, when my lord arrives ?  
 I yield, I yield ! my own Ulysses lives ! 240  
 The secrets of the bridal bed are known  
 To thee, to me, to Astoris alone,  
 (My father's present in the spousal hour,  
 The sole attendant on our genial bow'r).  
 Since what no eye has seen, thy tongue reveal'd, 245  
 Hard and distrustful as I am, I yield.

Touch'd to the soul, the king with rapture hears,  
 Hangs round her neck, and speaks his joy in tears.  
 As to the shipwreck'd mariner, the shores  
 Delightful rise, when angry Neptune roars ; 250  
 Then, when the surge in thunder mounts the sky,  
 And gulf'd in crouds at once the sailors die ;  
 If one more happy, while the tempest raves,  
 Outlives the tumult of conflicting waves,  
 All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the strand, 255  
 And plunging forth with transport grasps the land :

# 176 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIII.

The ravish'd queen with equal rapture glows,  
 Clasps her lov'd lord, and to his bosom grows.  
 Nor had they ended till the morning-ray :  
 But Pallas backward held the rising day, 260  
 The wheels of night retarding, to detain  
 The gay Aurora in the wavy main :  
 Whose flaming steeds, emerging through the night,  
 Beam o'er the eastern hills with streaming light.

At length Ulysses with a sigh replies : 265  
 Yet fate, yet cruel fate repose denies ;  
 A labour long, and hard, remains behind :  
 By heav'n above, by hell beneath injoin'd :  
 For to Tiresias through th' eternal gates  
 Of hell I trod, to learn my future fates. 270  
 But end we here—the night demands repose,  
 Be deck'd the couch ! and peace awhile, my woes !

To whom the queen : Thy word we shall obey,  
 And deck the couch ; far hence be woes away !  
 Since the just Gods, who tread the starry plains, 275  
 Restore thee safe, since my Ulysses reigns.  
 But what those perils heav'n decrees, impart ;  
 Knowledge may grieve, but fear distracts the heart.

To this the king : Ah why must I disclose  
 A dreadful story of approaching woes ? 280  
 Why in this hour of transport wound thy ears,  
 When thou must learn what I must speak with tears ?  
 Heav'n, by the Theban ghost, thy spouse decrees,  
 Torn from thy arms, to sail a length of seas ;  
 From realm to realm a nation to explore 285  
 Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,  
 Nor saw gay vessel stem the surgy plain,  
 A painted wonder, flying on the main.  
 An oar my hand must bear ; a shepherd eyes  
 The unknown instrument with strange surprise, 290  
 And calls a corn van : this upon the plain  
 I fix, and hail the monarch of the main ;



### XXXIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 177

Then bathe his altars with the mingled gore  
Of victims vow'd, a ram, a bull, a boar :  
Then swift resailing to my native shores, 295  
Due victims slay to all th' æthereal pow'rs.  
Then heav'n decrees in peace to end my days,  
And steal myself from life by slow decays ;  
Unknown to pain in age resign my breath,  
When late stern Neptune points the shaft of death ; 300  
To the dark grave retiring as to rest ;  
My people blessing, by my people blest.

Such future scenes th' all righteous pow'rs display,  
By their dread leer \*, and such my future day.

To whom thus firm of soul : If ripe for death, 305  
And full of days, thou gently yield thy breath ;  
While heav'n a kind release from ills foreshows,  
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes !

But Euryclea, with dispatchful care,  
And sage Eurynome, the couch prepare : 310  
Instant they bid the blazing torch display  
Around the dome an artificial day ;  
Then to repose her steps the matron bends,  
And to the queen Eurynome descends ;  
A torch she bears to light with guiding fires 315  
The royal pair ; she guides them, and retires.  
Then instant his fair spouse Ulysses led  
To the chaste love rites of the nuptial-bed.

And now the blooming youths and sprightly fair  
Cease the gay dance, and to their rest repair ; 320  
But in discourse the king and consort lay,  
While the soft hours stole unperceiv'd away ;  
Intent he hears Penelope disclose  
A mournful story of domestic woes,  
His servants insults, his invaded bed, 325  
How his whole flocks and herds exhausted bled,  
His generous wines dishonour'd shed in vain,  
And the wild riots of the suitor train,

\* Tiresias.

178 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIII

The king alternate a dire tale relates,  
 Of wars, of triumphs, and disastrous fates ; 330  
 All he unfolds : his list'ning spouse turns pale  
 With pleasing horror at the dreadful tale ;  
 Sleepless devours each word ; and hears, how slain  
 Cicons on Cicons swell th' ensanguin'd plain ;  
 How to the land of Lote unblest'd he sails ; 335  
 And images the rills and flow'ry vales !  
 How, dath'd like dogs, his friends the Cyclops tore,  
 (Not unreveng'd), and quaff'd the spouting gore ;  
 How the loud storms in prison bound, he fails  
 From friendly Æolus with prosp'rous gales : 340  
 Yet tate withstands ! a sudden tempest roars,  
 And whirls him groaning from his native shores :  
 How on the barb'rous Læstrigonian coast,  
 By savage hands his fleet and friends he lost ;  
 How scarce himself surviv'd ; he paints the bow'r, 345  
 The spells of Circe, and her magic pow'r ;  
 His dreadful journey to the realms beneath,  
 To seek Tiresias in the vales of death ;  
 How in the doleful mansions he survey'd  
 His royal mother, pale Anticlea's shade ; 350  
 And friends in battle slain, heroic ghosts !  
 Then how unharm'd he pass'd the Siren coasts,  
 Then jostling rocks, where fierce Charibdis raves  
 The howling Scylla whirls her thund'rous waves,  
 The cave of death ! How his companions slay 355  
 The oxen sacred to the God of day,  
 Till Jove in wrath the rattling tempest guides,  
 And whelms th' offenders in the roaring tides :  
 How struggling through the surge, he reach'd the shores  
 Of fair Ogygia, and Calypso's bow'rs ; 360  
 Where the gay blooming nymph constrain'd his stay,  
 With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay ;  
 And promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow  
 In mortal life exempt from age and wo :

### XXXIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 179

How, sav'd from storms, Phœacia's coast he trod, 365  
By great Alcinous honour'd as a God,  
Who gave him last his country to behold,  
With change of raiment, brass, and heaps of gold.

He ended, sinking into sleep, and shares  
A sweet forgetfulness of all his cares. 370

Soon as soft slumber eas'd the toils of day,  
Minerva rushes through the aerial way,  
And bids Aurora with her golden wheels  
Flame from the ocean o'er the eastern hills:  
Uprose Ulysses from the genial bed, 375  
And thus with thought mature the monarch said.

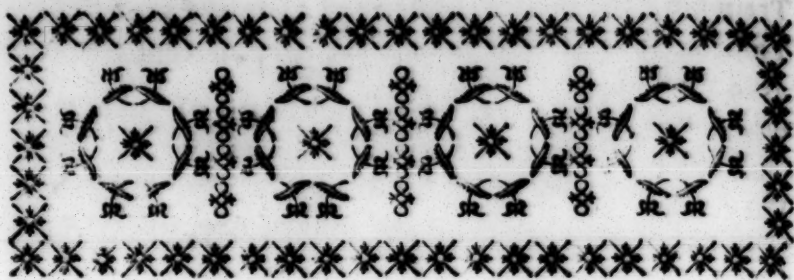
My queen, my consort! through a length of years,  
We drank the cup of sorrow mix'd with tears,  
Thou, for thy lord; while me th' immortal pow'rs  
Detain'd reluctant from my native shores. 380

Now, bless'd again by heav'n, the queen display,  
And rule our palace with an equal sway:  
Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,  
To throng my empty folds with gifts or spoils.  
But now I haste to bless Laertes' eyes 385  
With sight of his Ulysses ere he dies;  
The good old man, to wasting woes a prey,  
Weeps a sad life in solitude away:

But hear, though wife! This morning shall unfold  
The deathful scene, on heroes, heroes roll'd: 390  
Thou with thy maids within the palace stay,  
From all the scene of tumult far away!

He spoke, and sheath'd in arms, incessant flies  
To wake his son, and bid his friends arise.  
To arms! aloud he cries: his friends obey, 395  
With glitt'ring arms their many limbs array,  
And pass the city-gate; Ulysses leads the way.

Now flames the rosy dawn, but Pallas shrouds  
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.



T H E  
O D Y S S E Y.

B O O K XXIV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

*The souls of the suitors are conducted by Mercury to the infernal shades. Ulysses in the country goes to the retirement of his father Laertes; he finds him busied in his garden all alone: the manner of his discovery to him is beautifully described They return together to his lodge, and the king is acknowledged by Dolius and the servants. The Ithacensians, led by Eupithes, the father of Antinous, rise against Ulysses, who gives them battle, in which Eupithes is killed by Laertes: and the goddess Pallas, makes a lasting peace between Ulysses and his subjects, which concludes the Odyssey.*

CYllenius now to Pluto's dreary reign  
Conveys the dead, a lamentable train!  
The golden wand, that causes sleep to fly,  
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye,  
That drives the ghosts to realms of night or day, 5  
Points out the long, uncomfortable way.



## BXXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 181

Trembling the spectres glide, and plaintive vent  
Thin, hollow screams, along the deep descent.  
As in the cavern of some rifted den,  
Where flock nocturnal bats, and birds obscene; 10  
Cluster'd they hang, till at some sudden shock,  
They move, and murmurs run through all the rock :  
So cowering fled the fable heaps of ghoists,  
And such a scream fill'd all the dismal coasts.  
And now they reach'd the earth's remotest ends, 15  
And now the gates where ev'ning Sol descends,  
And Læucas' rock, and Ocean's utmost streams,  
And now pervade the dusky land of dreams ;  
And rest at last, where souls unbodied dwell  
In ever flow'ring meads of asphodel. 20  
The empty forms of men inhabit there,  
Impassive semblance, images of air !  
Nought else are all that shin'd on earth before ;  
Ajax, and great Achilles are no more !  
Yet still a master ghost, the rest he aw'd, 25  
The rest ador'd him, tow'ring as he trod ;  
Still at his side is Nestor's son survey'd,  
And lov'd Patroclus still attends his shade.

New as they were to that infernal shore,  
The spectators stopp'd, and gaz'd the hero o'er, 30  
When, moving slow, the regal form they view'd  
Of great Atrides : him in pomp pursu'd  
And solemn sadness through the gloom of hell,  
The train of those who by Ægysthus fell.  
O mighty chief (Pelides thus began), 35  
Honour'd by Jove above the lot of man !  
King of a hundred kings ! to whom resign'd  
The strongest, bravest, greatest of mankind !  
Com'st thou the first, to view this dreary state ?  
And was the noblest the first mark of fate ? 40  
Condemn'd to pay the great arrear so soon,  
The lot which all lament, and none can shun ;

182 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Oh! better hadst thou sunk in Trojan ground,  
 With all thy full blown honours cover'd round!  
 Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise 45  
 Historic marbles to record thy praise:  
 Thy praise eternal on the faithful stone,  
 Had with transmissive glories grac'd thy son.  
 But heavier fates were destin'd to attend:  
 What man is happy till he knows his end? 50  
 O son of Peleus! greater than mankind!  
 (Thus Agamemnon's kingly shade rejoin'd)  
 Thrice happy thou! to press the martial plain  
 'Midst heaps of heroes in thy quarrel slain:  
 In clouds of smoke, rais'd by the noble fray, 55  
 Great and terrific ev'n in death you lay,  
 And deluges of blood flow'd round you ev'ry way. }  
 Nor ceas'd the strife, till Jove himself oppos'd,  
 And all in tempests the dire ev'ning clos'd.  
 Then to the fleet we bore thy honour'd load, 60  
 Then decent on the fun'ral bed bestow'd.  
 Then unguents sweet, and tepid streams we shed;  
 Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and o'er the dead }  
 Each clipt the curling honours of his head. }  
 Struck at the news, thy azure mother came; 65  
 The sea-green sisters waited on the dame.  
 A voice of loud lament through all the main  
 Was heard, and terror seiz'd the Grecian train:  
 Back to their ships the frightened host had fled;  
 But Nestor spoke, they listen'd, and obey'd: 70  
 (From old experience Nestor's counsel springs,  
 And long vicissitudes of human things).  
 "Forbear your flight; fair Thetis from the main  
 "To mourn Achilles leads her azure train."  
 Around thee stand the daughters of the deep, 75  
 Robe thee in heav'nly vests, and round thee weep;  
 Round thee, the Muses, with alternate strain,  
 In ever consecrating verse, complain.

## B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY 183

Each warlike Greek the moving musick hears,  
And iron-hearted heroes melt in tears. 80  
Till sev'nteen nights and sev'nteen days return'd,  
All that was mortal or immortal mourn'd.  
To flames we gave thee, the succeeding day,  
And fatted sheep and fable oxen flay ;  
With oils and honey blaze th' augmented fires, 85  
And like a God adorn'd, thy earthly part expires.  
Unnumber'd warriors round the burning pile  
Urge the fleet courser's or the racer's toil ;  
Thick clouds of dust o'er all the circle rise,  
And the mix'd clamour thunders in the skies. 90  
Soon as absorpt in all embracing flame  
Sunk what was mortal of thy mighty name,  
We then collect thy snowy bones, and place  
With wines and unguents in a golden vase.  
(The vase to Thetis Bacchus gave of old, 95  
And Vulcan's art enrich'd the sculptur'd gold),  
There we thy relics, great Achilles! blend.  
With dear Patrocius, thy departed friend :  
In the same urn a sep'rate space contains  
Thy next belov'd, Antilochus' remains. 100  
Now all the sons of warlike Greece surround  
Thy destin'd tomb, and cast a mighty mound :  
High on the shore the growing hill we raise,  
That wide th' extended Hellespont surveys ;  
Where all, from age to age who pass the coast, 105  
May point Achilles' tomb, and hail the mighty ghost.  
Thetis herself to all our peers proclaims  
Heroic prizes and exequial games.  
The Gods assented ; and around thee lay  
Rich spoils and gifts that blaz'd against the day. 110  
Oft have I seen with solemn fun'ral games  
Heroes and kings committed to the flames ;  
But strength of youth, or valour of the brave,  
With nobler contest ne'er renown'd a grave.

184 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Such were the games by azure Thetis giv'n; 115  
 And such thy honours, oh belov'd of heav'n!  
 Dear to mankind thy fame survives, nor fades  
 Its bloom eternal in the Stygian shades.  
 But what to me avail my honours gone,  
 Successful toils, and battles bravely won? 120  
 Doom'd by stern Jove at home to end my life,  
 By curs'd Ægylthus, and a faithless wife!

Thus they; while Hermes o'er the dreary plain  
 Led the sad numbers by Ulysses slain.

On each majestic form they cast a view, 125  
 And tim'rous pals'd, and awfully withdrew.  
 But Agamemnon, through the gloomy shade,  
 His ancient host Amphimedon survey'd;  
 Son of Melanthius! (he began), O say!  
 What cause compell'd so many, and so gay, 130  
 To tread the downward, melancholy way?  
 Say, could one city yield a troop so fair?  
 Were all these partners of one native air?  
 Or did the rage of stormy Neptune sweep  
 Your lives at once, and whelm beneath the deep? 135  
 Did nightly thieves, or pirates cruel bands,  
 Drench with your blood your pillag'd country's sands?  
 Or well defending some beleagu'rd wall,  
 Say, for the public did ye greatly fall?  
 Inform thy guest; for such I was of yore, 140  
 When our triumphant navies touch'd your shore;  
 Forc'd a long month the wintry seas to bear,  
 To move the great Ulysses to the war.

O king of men! I faithful shall relate  
 (Reply'd Amphimedon) our hapless fate. 145  
 Ulysses absent, our ambitious aim  
 With rival loves pursu'd his royal dame:  
 Her coy reserve, and prudence mix'd with pride,  
 Our common suit nor granted, nor deny'd,  
 But close with inward hate our deaths design'd; 150  
 Vers'd in all arts of wily womankind.



## B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 185

Her hand, laborious, in delusion, spread  
A spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread :  
Ye peers, (she cry'd), who press to gain my heart  
Where dead Ulysses claims no more a part, 155  
Yet a short space your rival suit suspend,  
Till this funereal web my labours end :  
Cease, till to good Laertes I bequeath  
A task of grief, his ornaments of death :  
Lest, when the fates his royal ashes claim, 160  
The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame ;  
Should he, long honour'd with supreme command,  
Want the last duties of a daughter's hand.

The fiction pleas'd : our gen'rous train complies,  
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise. 165  
The work she ply'd ; but studious of delay,  
Each following night revers'd the toils of day.  
Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail ;  
The fourth, her maid reveal'd th' amazing tale,  
And show'd, as unperceiv'd we took our stand, 170  
The backward labours of her faithless hand.  
Forc'd, she compleats it ; and before us lay  
The mingled web, whose gold and silver ray  
Display'd the radiance of the night and day.

Just as she finish'd her illustrious toil, 175  
Ill fortune led Ulysses to our isle.

Far in a lonely nook, beside the sea,  
At an old swineherd's rural lodge he lay :  
Thither his son from sandy Pyle repairs,  
And speedy lands, and secretly confers. 180  
They plan our future ruin, and resort  
Confed'rate to the city and the court.

First came the son ; the father next succeeds,  
Clad like a beggar, whom Eumæus leads ;  
Propt on a staff, deform'd with age and care, 185  
And hung with rags, that flutter'd in the air.

186 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Who could Ulysses in that form behold?  
 Scorn'd by the young, forgotten by the old,  
 Ill us'd by all! to ev'ry wrong resign'd,  
 Patient he suffer'd with a constant mind. 190  
 But when, arising in his wrath t' obey  
 The will of Jove, he gave the vengeance way;  
 The scatter'd arms that hung around the dome  
 Careful he treatur'd in a private room:  
 Then to her suitors bade his queen propose 195  
 The archer's strife; the source of future woes,  
 And omen of our death! In vain we drew  
 The twanging string, and try'd the stubborn yew:  
 To none it yields but great Ulysses' hands;  
 In vain we threat; Telemachus commands: 200  
 The bow he snatch'd, and in an instant bent;  
 Through ev'ry ring the victor arrow went.  
 Fierce on the threshold then in arms he stood;  
 Pour'd forth the darts, that thirsted for our blood, }  
 And frown'd before us, dreadful as a God! 205 }  
 First bleeds Antinous: thick the shafts resound;  
 And heaps on heaps the wretches strow the ground;  
 This way, and that, we turn, we fly, we fall;  
 Some God assisted, and unman'd us all:  
 Ignoble cries precede the dying groans; 210  
 And batter'd brains and blood betwixt the stones.  
 Thus, great Atrides! thus Ulysses drove  
 The shades thou seest, from yon fair realms above.  
 Our mangled bodies now deform'd with gore,  
 Cold and neglected, spread the marble floor. 215  
 No friend to bathe our wounds! or tears to shed  
 O'er the pale corse! the honours of the dead.  
 Oh blest'd Ulysses! (thus the king express'd  
 His sudden rapture), in thy consort blest'd!  
 Not more thy wisdom, than her virtue shin'd; 220  
 Not more thy patience, than her constant mind.

B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

Icarius' daughter, glory of the past,  
And model to the future age, shall last:  
The Gods, to honour her fair fame, shall raise  
(Their great reward) a poet in her praise. 225  
Not such, oh Tyndarus! thy daughter's deed,  
By whose dire hand her king and husband bled:  
Her shall the muse to infamy prolong,  
Example dread! and theme of tragic song;  
The gen'ral sex shall suffer in her shame, 230  
And ev'n the best that bears a woman's name.

Thus in the regions of eternal shade  
Conferr'd the mournful phantoms of the dead.

While from the town, Ulysses, and his band,  
Pass'd to Laertes' cultivated land. 235  
The ground himself had purchas'd with his pain,  
And labour made the rugged soil a plain.  
There stood his mansion of the rural fort,  
With useful buildings round the lowly court:  
Where the few servants that divide his care, 240  
Took their laborious rest, and homely fare;  
And one Sicilian matron, old and sage,  
With constant duty tends his drooping age.

Here now arriving, to his rustic band  
And martial son, Ulysses gave command: 245  
Enter the house, and of the bristly swine  
Select the largest to the pow'rs divine.

Alone, and unattended, let me try  
If yet I share the old man's memory;  
If those dim eyes can yet Ulysses know, 250  
(Their light and dearest object long ago,)  
Now chang'd with time, with absence, and with woe!  
Then to his train he gives his spear and shield;  
The house they enter; and he seeks the field;  
Through rows of shade with various fruitage crown'd,  
And labour'd scenes of richest verdure round. 256

188 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Nor aged Dolius, nor his sons were there,  
Nor servants, absent on another care;  
To search the woods for sets of flow'ry thorn,  
Their orchard bounds to strengthen and adorn. 260

But all alone the hoary king he found;  
His habit coarse, but warmly wrapt around;  
His head, that bow'd with many a pensive care,  
Fenc'd with a double cap of goatskin hair;  
His buskins old, in former service torn, 265  
But well repair'd; and gloves against the thorn.  
In this array the kingly gard'ner stood,  
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.

Beneath a neighb'ring tree, the chief divine  
Gaz'd o'er his fire, retracing ev'ry line, 270  
The ruins of himself! now worn away  
With age, yet still majestic in decay!

Sudden his eyes releas'd their wat'ry store;  
The much enduring man could bear no more.  
Doubtful he stood, if instant to embrace 275  
His aged limbs, to kiss his rev'rend face,  
With eager transport to disclose the whole,  
And pour at once the torrent of his soul.—

Not so: his judgment takes the winding way  
Of question distant, and of soft assay; 280  
More gentle methods on weak age employs,  
And moves the sorrows to enhance the joys.

Then to his fire with beating heart he moves,  
And with a tender pleasantry reproves;  
Who digging round the plant still hangs his head, 285  
Nor ought remits the work, whi'e thus he said.

Great is thy skill, oh father! great thy toil;  
Thy careful hand is stamp'd on all the soil;  
Thy squadron'd vineyards well thy art declare,  
The olive green, blue fig, and pendent pear; 290  
And not one empty spot escapes thy care.



## B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 189

On ev'ry plant and tree thy cares are shown,  
Nothing neglected, but thyself alone.  
Forgive me, father, if this fault I blame;  
Age so advanc'd may some indulgence claim. 295  
Not for thy sloth I deem thy lord unkind;  
Nor speaks thy form a mean or servile mind:  
I read a monarch in that princely air,  
The same thy aspect, if the same thy care;  
Soft sleep, fair garments, and the joys of wine, 300  
These are the rights of age, and should be thine.  
Who then thy master, say? and whose the land  
So dress'd and manag'd by thy skilful hand?  
But chief, oh tell me! (what I question most),  
Is this the far-fam'd Ithacensian coast? 305  
For so reported the first man I view'd,  
(Some surly islander, of manners rude),  
Nor farther conference vouchsaf'd to stay;  
Heedless he whistled, and pursu'd his way.  
But thou! whom years have taught to understand, 310  
Humanely hear, and answer my demand:  
A friend I seek, a wise one and a brave,  
Say, lives he yet, or moulders in the grave?  
Time was (my fortunes then were at the best)  
When at my house I lodg'd this foreign guest; 315  
He said, from Ithaca's fair isle he came,  
And old Laertes was his father's name.  
To him whatever to a guest is ow'd  
I paid, and hospitable gifts bestow'd;  
To him sev'n talents of pure ore I told, 320  
Twelve cloaks, twelve vests, twelve tunics stiff with gold,  
A bowl that rich with polish'd silver flames,  
And, skill'd in female works, four lovely dames.  
At this the father, with a father's fears;  
(His venerable eyes bedimm'd with tears). 325  
This is the land; but ah! thy gifts are lost,  
For godless men, and rude, possess the coast:

190 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Sunk is the glory of this once-fam'd shore!  
 Thy ancient friend, oh stranger, is no more!  
 Full recompense thy bounty else had born; 330  
 For ev'ry good man yields a just return:  
 So civil rights demand: and who begins  
 The track of friendship, not pursuing, sins.  
 But tell me, stranger, be the truth confess'd,  
 What years have circled since thou saw'st that guest?  
 That hapless guest alas! for ever gone! 336  
 Wretch that he was! and that I am! my son!  
 If ever man to misery was born,  
 'Twas his to suffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!  
 Far from his friends, and from his native reign, 340  
 He lies a prey to monsters of the main,  
 Or savage beasts his mangled relics tear,  
 Or screaming vultures scatter through the air:  
 Nor could his mother fun'ral unguents shed;  
 Nor wail'd his father o'er th' untimely dead; 345  
 Nor his sad consort, on the mournful bier,  
 Seal'd his cold eyes, or dropp'd a tender tear!  
 But tell me, who thou art? and what thy race?  
 Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place?  
 Or if a merchant in pursuit of gain, 350  
 What port receiv'd thy vessel from the main?  
 Or com'st thou single, or attend thy train?  
 Then thus the son: From Alybas I came,  
 My palace there; Eperitus my name.  
 Not vulgar born, from Aphidas the king, 355  
 Of Polypemon's royal line, I spring.  
 Some adverse dæmon from Sicania bore  
 Our wand'ring course, and drove us on your shore:  
 Far from the town, an unfrequented bay  
 Reliev'd our weary'd vessel from the sea. 360  
 Five years have circled since these eyes pursu'd  
 Ulysses parting through the sable flood:  
 Prosp'rous he sail'd, with dexter auguries,  
 And all the wing'd good omens of the skies.

## B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 191

Well hop'd we, then, to meet on this fair shore, 365  
Whom heav'n, alas! decreed to meet no more.

Quick through the father's heart these accents ran;  
Grief seiz'd at once, and wrapt up all the man;  
Deep from his soul he sigh'd, and sorrowing spread  
A cloud of ashes on his hoary head. 370

Trembling with agonies of strong delight  
Stood the great son, heart-wounded with the sight:  
He ran, he seiz'd him with a strict embrace,  
With thousand kisses wander'd o'er his face;  
I, I am he: oh, father! rise, behold 375

Thy son, with twenty winters now grown old;  
Thy son, so long desir'd, so long detain'd,  
Restor'd, and breathing in his native land:  
These floods of sorrow, oh my sire! restrain!  
The vengeance is complete; the suitor train, 380  
Stretch'd in our palace, by these hands lie slain.

Amaz'd, Laertes: "Give some certain sign,  
" (If such thou art) to manifest thee mine."  
Lo here the wound (he cries) receiv'd of yore,  
The scar indented by the tusky boar, 385  
When by thyself and by Anticlea sent,  
To old Autolycus's realms I went.

Yet by another sign thy offspring know;  
The sev'ral trees you gave me long ago,  
While, yet a child, these fields I lov'd to trace, 390  
And trod thy footsteps with unequal pace;  
To ev'ry plant in order as we came,

Well-pleas'd you told its nature, and its name,  
Whate'er my childish fancy ask'd, bestow'd;  
Twelve pear-trees bowing with their pendent load, }  
And ten, that red with blushing apples glow'd; 396

Full fifty purple figs; and many a row  
Of various vines that then began to blow,  
A future vintage: when the Hours produce  
Their latent buds, and Sol exalts the juice. 400

192 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Smit with the signs which all his doubts explain,  
His heart within him melts; his knees sustain  
Their feeble weight no more: his arms alone  
Support him, round the lov'd Ulysses thrown;  
He faints, he sinks, with mighty joys oppress: 405  
Ulysses clasps him to his eager breast.

Soon as returning life regains its seat,  
And his breath lengthens, and his pulses beat;  
Yes, I believe, (he cries), almighty Jove!  
Heav'n rules us yet, and Gods there are above. 410

'Tis so—the suitors for their wrongs have paid—  
But what shall guard us, if the town invade?  
If, while the news through ev'ry city flies,  
All Ithaca and Cephallenia rise?

To this Ulysses: As the Gods shall please 415  
Be all the rest; and set thy soul at ease.  
Haste to the cottage by this orchard side,  
And take the banquet which our cares provide:  
There wait thy faithful band of rural friends,  
And there the young Telemachus attends. 420

Thus having said, they trac'd the garden o'er,  
And stooping enter'd at the lowly door.  
The swains and young Telemachus they found,  
The victim portion'd, and the goblet crown'd.  
The hoary king his old Sicilian maid 425  
Pertum'd and wash'd, and gorgeously array'd.  
Pallas attending gives his frame to shine,  
With awful port, and majesty divine;  
His gazing son admires the godlike grace,  
And air celestial dawning o'er his face. 430

What God (he cry'd) my father's form improves?  
How high he treads, and how enlarg'd he moves?  
Oh! would to all the deathless pow'rs on high,  
Pallas and Jove, and him who gilds the sky!  
Reply'd the king, elated with his praise), 435  
My strength were still, as once in better days;



B. XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 193

When the bold Cephalens the leaguer form'd,  
And proud Nericus trembled as I storm'd.  
Such were I now, not absent from your deed,  
When the last sun beheld the suitors bleed, 440  
This arm had aided yours; this hand bestrown  
Our floors with death, and push'd the slaughter on; }  
Nor had the fire been sep'rate from the son.

They commun'd thus; while homeward bent their  
way

The swains, fatigu'd with labours of the day; 445  
Dolius the first, the venerable man;  
And next his sons, a long succeeding train.  
For due refection to the bow'r they came,  
Call'd by the careful old Sicilian dame,  
Who nurs'd the children, and now tends the fire; 450  
They see their lord, they gaze, and they admire.  
On chairs and beds in order seated round,  
They share the gladsome board; the roofs resound.  
While thus Ulysses to his ancient friend:

"Forbear your wonder, and the feast attend; 455  
"The rites have waited long." The chief commands  
Their loves in vain; old Dolius spreads his hands,  
Springs to his master with a warm embrace,  
And fastens kisses on his hands and face:

Then thus broke out. Oh long, oh daily mourn'd!  
Beyond our hopes, and to our wish, return'd! 460  
Conducted sure by heav'n! for heav'n alone  
Could work this wonder: welcome to thy own! }  
And joys and happiness attend thy throne! }  
Who knows thy blest'd, thy wish'd return? oh say, 465  
To the chaste queen shall we the news convey? }  
Or hears she, and with blessings loads the day? }

Dismiss that care, for to the royal bride  
Already is it known, (the king reply'd,  
And straight resum'd his seat); while round him bows 470  
Each faithful youth, and breathes out ardent vows:

194 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

Then all beneath their father take their place,  
Rank'd by their ages, and the banquet grace.

Now flying fame the swift report had spread  
Through all the city, of the suitors dead. 475

In throngs they rise, and to the palace croud ;  
Their sighs were many, and the tumult loud.

Weeping they bear the mangled heaps of slain,  
Inhume the natives in their native plain, 480

The rest in ships are wasted o'er the main.  
Then sad in council all the seniors sat,

Frequent and full, assembled to debate.  
Amid the circle first Eupithes rose,

Big was his eye with tears, his heart with woes :  
The bold Antinous was his age's pride, 485

The first who by Ulysses' arrow dy'd.  
Down his wan cheek the trickling torrent ran,

As mixing words with sighs, he thus began.  
Great deeds, oh friends ! this wondrous man has

wrought,  
And mighty blessings to his country brought. 490

With ships he parted, and a numerous train ;  
Those, and their ships he bury'd in the main.

Now he returns, and first assays his hand  
In the best blood of all his native land.

Haste then, and ere to neighb'ring Pyle he flies, 495  
Or sacred Elis, to procure supplies ;

Arise, (or ye for ever fall), arise !  
Shame to this age, and all that shall succeed !

If unreveng'd your sons and brothers bleed.  
Prove that we live, by vengeance on his head, 500

Or sink at once forgotten with the dead.

Here ceas'd he, but indignant tears let fall  
Spoke when he ceas'd : dumb sorrow touch'd them all.

When from the palace to the wond'ring throng  
Sage Medon came, and Phemius came along ; 505

## XXXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 195

(Restless and early sleep's soft bands they broke);  
And Medon first th' assembled chiefs bespoke.

Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land,  
Who deem this act the work of mortal hand;  
As o'er the heaps of death Ulysses strode, 510  
These eyes, these eyes beheld a present God,  
Who now before him, now beside him stood,  
Fought as he fought, and mark'd his way with blood:  
In vain old Mentor's form the God bely'd;  
'Twas heav'n that struck, and heav'n was on his side.

A sudden horror all th' assembly shook, 516  
When, slowly rising, Halitherses spoke;  
(Rev'rend and wise, whose comprehensive view  
At once the present and the future knew):  
Me too ye fathers hear! from you proceed 520  
The ills ye mourn; your own the guilty deed.  
Ye gave your sons, your lawless sons, the rein,  
(Oft warn'd by Mentor and myself in vain);  
An absent hero's bed they sought to soil,  
An absent hero's wealth they made their spoil: 525  
Immoderate riot, and intemperate lust!  
Th' offence was great, the punishment was just.  
Weigh then my counsels in an equal scale,  
Nor rush to ruin. Justice will prevail.

His moderate words some better minds persuade: 530  
They part, and join him; but the number stay'd.  
They storm, they shout, with hasty frenzy fir'd,  
And second all Eupithes' rage inspir'd.  
They cast their limbs in brass; to arms they run;  
The broad effulgence blazes in the sun. 535  
Before the city, and in ample plain,  
They meet: Eupithes heads the frantic train.  
Fierce for his son, he breathes his threats in air;  
Fate hears them not, and death attends him there.

This pass'd on earth, while in the realms above 540  
Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove.

196 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B. XXIV.

May I presume to search thy secret soul ?  
 Oh pow'r supreme, oh ruler of the whole !  
 Say, hast thou doom'd to this divided state  
 Or peaceful amity, or stern debate ?  
 Declare thy purpose ; for thy will is fate.

545

Is not thy thought my own ? (the God replies  
 Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies) ;  
 Hath not long since thy knowing soul decreed,  
 The chief's return should make the guilty bleed ?  
 'Tis done, and at thy will the fates succeed.

350

Yet hear the issue : since Ulysses' hand  
 Has slain the suitors, heaven shall bless the land.  
 None now the kindred of th' unjust shall own ;  
 Forgot the slaughter'd brother, and the son :  
 Each future day increase of wealth shall bring,  
 And o'er the past, oblivion stretch her wing.  
 Long shall Ulysses in his empire rest,  
 His people blessing, by his people blest.

555

Let all be peace — He said, and gave the nod  
 That binds the fates ; the sanction of the God ;  
 And prompt to execute th' eternal will,  
 Descended Pallas from th' Olympian hill.

560

Now sat Ulysses at the rural feast,  
 The rage of hunger and of thirst repress :  
 To watch the foe a trusty spy he sent :  
 A son of Dolius on the message went,  
 Stood in the way, and at a glance beheld  
 The foe approach'd, embattled on the field.  
 With backward step he hastens to the bow'r,  
 And tells the news. They arm with all their pow'r.  
 Four friends alone Ulysses' cause embrace,  
 And six were all the sons of Dolius' race :  
 Old Dolius too his rusted arms put on ;  
 And, still more old, in arms Laertes shone.  
 Trembling with warmth, the hoary heroes stand,  
 And brazen panoply invests the band.

570

575



## LXXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 197

The op'ning gates at once their war display :  
Fierce they rush forth : Ulysses leads the way.  
That moment joins them with celestial aid, 580  
In Mentor's form, the Jove-descended maid :  
The suff'ring hero felt his patient breast  
Swell with new joy, and thus his son address.

Behold, Telemachus ! (nor fear the fight) ;  
The brave embattled ; the grim front of fight ! 585  
The valiant with the valiant must contend :  
Shame not the line whence glorious you descend,  
Wide o'er the world their martial fame was spread ;  
Regard thyself, the living, and the dead.

Thy eyes, great father ! on this battle cast, 590  
Shall learn from me Penelope was chaste.

So spoke Telemachus ! the gallant boy  
Good old Laertes heard with panting joy ;  
And blest'd ! Thrice blest'd this happy day ! he cries,  
The day that shows me, ere I close my eyes, 595  
A son and grandson of th' Arcean name  
Strive for fair virtue, and contest for fame !

Then thus Minerva in Laertes' ear :  
Son of Arcegius, rev'rend warrior, hear !  
Jove and Jove's daughter first implore in pray'r, 600  
Then whirling high, discharge thy lance in air.

She said, infusing courage with the word.  
Jove and Jove's daughter then the chief implor'd,  
And whirling high, dismiss'd the lance in air,  
Full at Eupithes drove the deathful spear : 605  
The brass-cheek'd helmet opens to the wound ;  
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound.

Before the father and the conqu'ring son  
Heaps rush on heaps ; they fight, they drop, they run.  
Now by the sword and now the jav'lin fall 610  
The rebel race, and death had swallow'd all ;  
But from on high the blue-ey'd virgin cry'd ;  
Her awful voice detain'd the headlong tide.

198 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. B.XXIV.

" Forbear, ye nations ! your mad hands forbear

" From mutual slaughter : peace descends to spare."

Fear shook the nations. At the voice divine 616

They drop their jav'lins, and their rage resign.

All scatter'd round their glitt'ring weapons lie ;

Some fall to earth, and 'some confus'dly fly.

With dreadful shouts Ulysses pour'd along, 620

Swift as an eagle, as an eagle strong.

But Jove's red arm the burning thunder aims ;

Before Minerva shot the livid flames ;

Blazing they fell, and at their feet expir'd :

Then stopt the Goddess, trembled, and retir'd. 625

Descended from the Gods ! Ulysses cease ;

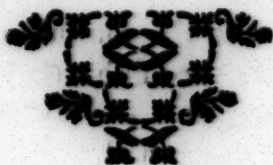
Offend not Jove : obey, and give the peace.

So Pallas spake. The mandate from above

The king obey'd. The virgin-seed of Jove,

In Mentor's form, confirm'd the full accord, 630

" And willing nations knew their lawful lord."





# H O M E R ' s B A T T L E O F T H E F R O G S A N D M I C E .

Translated by Mr. PARNELL.

Corrected by Mr. POPE.

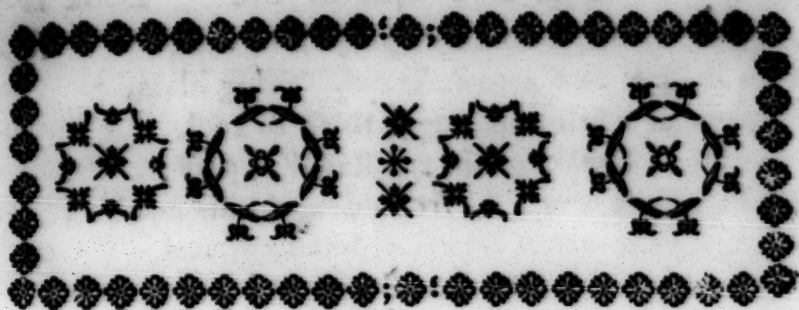
## Names of the MICE.

**PSYCARPAX**, *One who plunders granaries.*  
**Troxartes**, *A bread eater.*  
**Lychomile**, *A licker of meal*  
**Pternotroctas**, *A bacon eater.*  
**Lycopinax**, *A licker of dishes.*  
**Embalichytros**, *A creeper into pots.*  
**Lychenor**, *A name from licking.*  
**Troglodytes**, *One who runs into holes.*  
**Artophagus**, *Who feeds on bread.*  
**Tyroglyphus**, *A cheese-scooper.*  
**Pternoglyphus**, *A bacon-scooper.*  
**Pternophagus**, *A bacon eater.*  
**Cnissodioetes**, *One who follows the steam of kitchens*  
**Sitophagus**, *An eater of wheat.*  
**Meridarpax**, *One who plunders his share.*

## Names of the FROGS.

**PHYSIGNATHUS**, *One who swells his cheeks*  
**Peleus**, *A name from mud*  
**Hydromeduse**, *A ruler in the waters.*  
**Hypsiboas**, *A loud bawler.*  
**Pelion**, *from mud*  
**Seutlaus**, *Called from the beets.*  
**Polyphonus**, *A great babbler.*  
**Lymnocharis**, *One who loves the lake.*  
**Crambophagus**, *Cabbage eater.*  
**Lymniscus**, *Called from the lake.*  
**Calaminthus**, *From the herb.*  
**Hydrocharis**, *Who loves the water.*  
**Borborocates**, *Who lies in the mud.*  
**Prassophagus**, *An eater of garlic.*  
**Pelusius**, *From mud*  
**Pelobates**, *Who walks in the dirt.*  
**Prassus**, *Called from garlic.*  
**Craugasides**, *From croaking.*





H O M E R ' s  
B A T T L E  
O F T H E  
F R O G S A N D M I C E .  
B O O K I .

**T**O fill my rising song with sacred fire,  
Ye tuneful Nine, ye sweet celestial quire!  
From Helicon's imbow'ring height repair,  
Attend my labours, and reward my pray'r.  
The dreadful toils of raging Mars I write, 5  
The springs of contest, and the fields of fight:  
How threat'ning mice advanc'd with warlike grace,  
And wag'd dire combats with the croaking race.  
Not louder tumults shook Olympus' tow'rs,  
When earth-born giants dar'd immortal pow'rs. 10  
These equal acts an equal glory claim,  
And thus the Muse records the tale of fame.  
Once on a time, fatigu'd and out of breath,  
And just escap'd the stretching claws of death,

A gentle mouse, whom cats pursu'd in vain, 15  
 Flies swift of foot across the neighb'ring plain,  
 Hangs o'er a brink his eager thirst to cool,  
 And dips his whiskers in the standing pool;  
 When near a courteous frog advanc'd his head,  
 And from the waters hoarse resounding, said. 20

What art thou, stranger? what the line you boast?  
 What chance hath cast thee panting on our coast?  
 With strictest truth let all thy words agree,  
 Nor let me find a faithless mouse in thee.

If worthy friendship, proffer'd friendship take, 25  
 And ent'ring view the pleasurable lake:  
 Range o'er my palace, in my bounty share,  
 And glad return from hospitable fare.

This silver realm extends beneath my sway,  
 And me, their monarch, all its frogs obey. 30

Great Phrygnathus I, from Peleus' race,  
 Begot in fair Hydromeduse' embrace,  
 Where, by the nuptial bank that paints his side,  
 The swift Eridanus delights to glide.

Thee too, thy form, thy strength, and port proclaim,  
 A sceptred king; a son of martial fame; 36

Then trace thy line, and aid my guessing eyes.  
 Thus ceas'd the frog, and thus the mouse replies.

Known to the Gods, the men, the birds that fly,  
 Through wild expanses of the midway sky, 40

My name resounds; and if unknown to thee,  
 The soul of great Psycarpax lives in me,  
 Of brave Troxartes' line, whose sleeky down  
 In love compress'd Lycomile the brown.

My mother she, and princess of the plains 45  
 Where-e'er her father Pternotroctas reigns:

Born where a cabin lifts its airy shade,  
 With figs, with nuts, with vary'd dainties fed.  
 But since our natures nought in common know,  
 From what foundation can a friendship grow? 50

These curling waters o'er thy palace roll;  
 But man's high food supports my princely soul.  
 In vain the circled loaves attempt to lie  
 Conceal'd in flasks from my curious eye;  
 In vain the tripe that boasts the whitest hue, 55  
 In vain the gilded bacon shuns my view,  
 In vain the cheeses, offspring of the pale,  
 Or honey'd cakes, which Gods themselves regale.  
 And as in arts I shine, in arms I fight,  
 Mix'd with the bravest, and unknown to flight. 60  
 Tho' large to mine the human form appear,  
 Not man himself can smite my soul with fear,  
 Sly to the bed with silent steps I go,  
 Attempt his finger, or attack his toe,  
 And fix indented wounds with dextrous skill, 65  
 Sleeping he feels, and only seems to feel.  
 Yet have we foes which direful dangers cause,  
 Grim owls with talons arm'd, and cats with claws;  
 And that false trap, the den of silent fate,  
 Where death his ambush plants around the bait; 70  
 All dreaded these, and dreadful o'er the rest  
 The potent warriors of the tabby vest.  
 If to the dark we fly, the dark they trace,  
 And rend our heroes of the nibbling race.  
 But me, nor stalks, nor wat'rish herbs delight, 75  
 Nor can the crimson radish charm my sight;  
 The lake-resounding frogs selected fare,  
 Which not a mouse of any taste can bear.

As thus the downy prince his mind express'd,  
 His answer thus the croaking king address'd. 80

Thy words luxuriant on thy dainties rove,  
 And, stranger, we can boast of bounteous Jove:  
 We sport in water, or we dance on land,  
 And born amphibious, food from both command.  
 But trust thyself where wonders ask thy view, 85  
 And safely tempt those seas, I'll bear thee through:

Ascend my shoulders, firmly keep thy seat,  
And reach my marshy court, and feast in state.

He said, and leant his back ; with nimble bound  
Leaps the light mouse, and clasps his arms around, 90  
Then wond'ring floats, and sees with glad survey  
The winding banks dissemble ports at sea.

But when aloft the curling water rides,  
And wets with azure wave his downy sides ;  
His thoughts grow conscious of approaching wo, 95  
His idle tears with vain repentance flow,

His locks he rends, his trembling feet he rears ;  
Thick beats his heart with unaccustom'd fears ;  
He sighs, and chill'd with danger, longs for shore :  
His tail extended forms a fruitless oar, 100  
Half drench'd in liquid death his pray'rs he spake,  
And thus bemoan'd him from the dreadful lake.

So pass'd Europa thro' the rapid sea,  
Trembling and fainting all the vent'rous way ;  
With oary feet the bull triumphant rode, 105  
And safe in Crete depos'd his lovely load.

Ah safe at last ! may thus the frog support  
My trembling limbs to reach his ample court.

As thus he sorrows, death ambiguous grows,  
Lo ! from the deep a water Hydra rose ; 110  
He rolls his sanguin'd eyes, his bosom heaves ;  
And darts with active rage along the waves.  
Confus'd, the monarch sees his hissing foe,  
And dives to shun the fable fates below.

Forgetful frog ! The friend thy shoulders bore, 115  
Unskill'd in swimming, floats remote from shore.

He grasps with fruitless hands to find relief,  
Supinely falls, and grinds his teeth with grief ;  
Plunging he sinks, and struggling mounts again,  
And sinks, and strives, but strives with fate in vain. 120  
The weighty moisture clogs his hairy vest,  
And thus the prince his dying rage express.



Book I. FROGS and MICE. 205

Nor thou, that flings me flound'ring from thy back,  
As from hard rocks rebounds the shatt'ring wrack,  
Nor thou shalt 'scape thy due, perfidious king! 125  
Pursu'd by vengeance on the swiftest wing:  
At land thy strength could never equal mine,  
At sea to conquer, and by craft, was thine.  
But heav'n has Gods, and Gods have searching eyes:  
Ye mice, ye mice, my great avengers rise! 130

This said, he sighing gasp'd, and gasping dy'd,  
His death the young Lycophinax eipy'd,  
As on the flow'ry brink he pass'd the day,  
Bask'd in the beam, and loiter'd life away:  
Loud shrieks the mouse, his shrieks the shores repeat;  
The nibbling nation learn their hero's fate: 136  
Grief, dismal grief ensues; deep murmurs sound,  
And shriller fury fills the deafen'd ground;  
From lodge to lodge the sacred heralds run,  
To fix their council with the rising sun; 140  
Where great Troxartes crown'd in glory reigns,  
And winds his length'ning court beneath the plains:  
Pfy carpax's father, father now no more!  
For poor Pfy carpax lies remote from shore:  
Supine he lies! the silent waters stand, 145  
And no kind billow wafts the dead to land!





## B O O K II.

When rosy finger'd morn had ting'd the clouds,  
 Around their monarch moule the nation crouds,  
 Slow rose the monarch, heav'd his anxious breast,  
 And thus, the council fill'd with rage, addrest.

For lost Psycarpax much my soul endures, 5  
 'Tis mine the private grief, the public, yours;  
 Three warlike sons adorn'd my nuptial bed,  
 Three sons, alas, before their father dead!  
 Our eldest perish'd by the rav'ning cat,  
 As near my court the prince unheedful sat. 10  
 Our next, an engine fraught with danger drew,  
 The portal gap'd, the bait was hung in view,  
 Dire arts assist the trap, the fates decoy,  
 And men unpitying kill'd my gallant boy.  
 The last, his country's hope, his parent's pride, 15  
 Plung'd in the lake by Physignathus, dy'd.  
 Rouse all the war, my friends! avenge the deed,  
 And bleed that monarch, and his nation bleed.

His words in ev'ry breast inspir'd alarms,  
 And careful Mars supply'd their host with arms. 20  
 In verdant hulls despoil'd of all their beans,  
 The buskin'd warriors stalk'd along the plains,  
 Quills aptly bound, their bracing corselet made,  
 Fac'd with the plunder of a cat they slay'd,  
 The lamp's round boss affords their ample shield, 25  
 Large shells of nuts their cov'ring helmet yield;  
 And o'er the region, with reflected rays,  
 Tall groves of needles for their lances blaze.  
 Dreadful in arms the marching mice appear:  
 The wond'ring frogs perceive the tumult near, 30

**Book II. FROGS and MICE. 207**

Forfake the waters, thick'ning form a ring;  
And ask, and hearken, whence the noises spring;  
When near the croud, disclos'd to public view,  
The valiant chief Embasichytros drew:  
The sacred herald's sceptre grac'd his hand, 35  
And thus his words express'd his kings command.  
Ye frogs! the mice with vengeance fir'd, advance,  
And deck'd in armour shake the shining lance;  
Their hapless prince by Phylgnathus slain,  
Extends incumbent on the wat'ry plain. 40  
Then arm your host, the doubtful battle try;  
Lead forth those frogs that have the soul to die.

The chief retires, the croud the challenge hear,  
And proudly swelling, yet perplex'd appear;  
Much they resent, yet much their monarch blame, 45  
Who rising, spoke to clear his tainted fame.

O friends! I never forc'd the mouse to death,  
Nor saw the gaspings of his latest breath.  
He, vain of youth, our art of swimming try'd,  
And vent'rous in the lake the wanton dy'd. 50  
To vengeance now by false appearance led,  
They point their anger at my guiltless head.  
But wage the rising war with deep device,  
And turn its fury on the crafty mice.  
Your king directs the way; my thoughts elate 55  
With hopes of conquest, form designs of fate.  
Where high the banks their verdant surface heave,  
And the steep sides confine the sleeping wave,  
There, near the margin, and in armour bright,  
Sustain the first impetuous shocks of fight: 60  
Then where the dancing feather joins the crest,  
Let each brave frog his obvious mouse arrest;  
Each strongly grasping, headlong plunge a foe,  
Till countless circles whirl the lake below;  
Down sink the mice in yielding waters drown'd; 65  
Loud flash the waters; echoing shores resound:

The frogs triumphant tread the conquer'd plain,  
And raise their glorious trophies of the slain.

He spake no more, his prudent scheme imparts  
Redoubling ardour to the boldest hearts.

70

Green was the suit his arming heroes chose,  
Around their legs the greaves of mallows close,  
Green were the beets about their shoulders laid,  
And green the colewort, which the target made,

75

Form'd of the vary'd shells the waters yield,  
Their glossy helmets glisten'd o'er the field;  
And tap'ring sea-reeds for the polish'd spear,  
With upright order pierc'd the ambient air.  
Thus dress'd for war, they take th'appointed height,  
Poize the long arms, and urge the promis'd fight.

80

But now, where Jove's irradiate spires arise,  
With stars surrounded in æthereal skies,

(A solemn council call'd) the brazen gates  
Unbar; the Gods assume their golden seats:

The fire superior leans, and points to show

85

What wondrous combats mortals wage below:  
How strong, how large, the num'rous heroes stride;  
What length of lance they shake with warlike pride:

What eager fire their rapid march reveals;

So the fierce Centaurs ravag'd o'er the dales;

90

And so confirm'd, the daring Titans rose,

Heap'd hills on hills, and bid the Gods be foes.

This seen, the pow'r his sacred visage rears,  
He casts a pitying smile on worldly cares,

And asks what heav'nly guardians take the list,

95

Or who the mice, or who the frogs assist?

Then thus to Pallas. If my daughter's mind  
Have join'd the mice, why stays she still behind?

Drawn forth by fav'ry steams they wind their way,

And sure attendance round thine altar pay,

100

Where while the victims gratify their taste,

They sport to please the Goddess of the feast.



**Book II. FROGS and MICE. 209**

Thus spake the ruler of the spacious skies,  
When thus, resolv'd, the blue-ey'd maid replies.  
In vain, my father! all their dangers plead; 105  
To such thy Pallas never grants her aid.  
My flow'ry wreaths they petulantly spoil,  
And rob my crystal lamps of feeding oil,  
(Ills following illis); but what afflicts me more,  
My veil, that idle race profanely tore. 110  
The web was curious, wrought with art divine;  
Relentless wretches! all the work was mine:  
Along the loom the purple warp I spread,  
Cast the light shoot, and cross'd the silver thread.  
In this their teeth a thousand breaches tear; 115  
The thousand breaches skilful hands repair;  
For which, vile earthly duns thy daughter grieve,  
But Gods, that use no coin, have none to give;  
And learning's Goddesses never less can owe,  
Neglected learning gets no wealth below. 120  
Nor let the frogs to gain my succour sue,  
Those clam'rous fools have lost my favour too.  
For late, when all the conflict ceas'd at night,  
When my stretch'd sinews ach'd with eager fight,  
When spent with glorious toil, I left the field, 125  
And sunk for slumber on my swelling shield;  
Lo from the deep, repelling sweet repose,  
With noisy croakings half the nation rose:  
Devoid of rest, with aching brows I lay,  
Till cocks proclaim'd the crimson dawn of day. 130  
Let all, like me, from either host forbear,  
Nor tempt the flying furies of the spear.  
Let heav'nly blood (or what for blood may flow)  
Adorn the conquest of a meaner foe,  
Who, wildly rushing, meet the wondrous odds, 135  
Tho' Gods oppose, and brave the wounded Gods.  
O'er gilded clouds reclin'd, the danger view,  
And be the wars of mortal scenes for you,

So mov'd the blue ey'd queen, her words persuade,  
Great Jove assented, and the rest obey'd.

140



## B O O K III.

**N**OW front to front the marching armies shine,  
Halt ere they meet, and form the length'ning  
The chiefs conspicuous seen, and heard afar, [line;  
Give the loud sign to loose the rushing war;  
Their dreadful trumpets deep-mouth'd horns sound,  
The sounded charge remurmurs o'er the ground; 6  
Ev'n Jove proclaims a field of horror nigh,  
And rolls low thunder thro' the troubled sky.

First to the fight the large Hypsiboas flew,  
And brave Lychenor with a jav'lin flew; 10  
The luckless warrior, fill'd with gen'rous flame,  
Stood foremost glitt'ring in the post of fame.  
When in his liver struck the jav'lin hung,  
The mouse fell thund'ring, and the target rung:  
Prone to the ground he sinks his closing eye, 15  
And, soil'd in dust, his lovely tresses lie.

A spear at Pelion Troglodytes cast;  
The missive spear within the bosom past;  
Death's sable shades the fainting frog surround,  
And life's red tide runs ebbing from the wound. 20

Embafichytros felt Seutlaus' dart  
Transfix, and quiver in his panting heart;  
But great Artophagus aveng'd the slain,  
And big Seutlaus tumbling loads the plain, 25  
And Polyphonus dies a frog renown'd  
For boastful speech and turbulence of sound;  
Deep through the belly pierc'd, supine he lay,  
And breath'd his soul against the face of day.

**Book III. FROGS and MICE. 211**

The strong Lymnocharis, who view'd with ire,  
A victor triumph, and a friend expire; 30  
With heaving arms a rocky fragment caught,  
And fiercely flung where Troglodytes fought,  
A warrior vers'd in arts, of sure retreat,  
Yet arts in vain elude impending fate;  
Full on his finewy neck the fragment fell, 35  
And o'er his eye-lids clouds eternal dwell.  
Lychenor (second of the glorious name)  
Striding advanc'd, and took no wand'ring aim;  
Thro' all the frog the shining jav'lin flies,  
And near the vanquish'd mouse the victor dies. 40  
The dreadful stroke Crambophagus affrights,  
Long bred to banquets, less inur'd to fights;  
Heedless he runs, and stumbles o'er the steep,  
And wildly flound'ring flashes up the deep:  
Lychenor, following, with a downward blow 45  
Reach'd, in the lake, his unrecover'd foe;  
Gasp'ing he rolls, a purple stream of blood  
Distains the surface of the silver flood;  
Thro' the wide wound the rushing entrails throng,  
And slow the breathless carcase floats along. 50  
Lymnifius good Tyroglyphus assails,  
Prince of the mice that haunt the flow'ry vales,  
Lost to the milky fares and rural seat,  
He came to perish on the bank of fate.  
The dread Pternoglyphus demands the fight, 55  
Which tender Calaminthus shuns by flight;  
Drops the green target, springing quits the foe,  
Glides thro' the lake, and safely dives below.  
The dire Pternophagus divides his way  
Thro' breaking ranks, and leads the dreadful day. 60  
No nibbling prince excell'd in fierceness more,  
His parents fed him on the savage boar:  
But where his lance with blood the field imbru'd,  
Swift as he mov'd Hydrocharis pursu'd,

Till fall'n in death he lies; a shatt'ring stone 65  
 Sounds on the neck, and crushes all the bone;  
 His blood pollutes the verdure of the plain,  
 And from his nostrils bursts the gushing brain.  
 Lycopinax with Borbocætes fights,  
 A blameless frog, whom humbler life delights; 70  
 The fatal jav'lin unrelenting flies,  
 And darkness seals the gentle croaker's eyes.  
 Incens'd Prassophagus, with sprightly bound,  
 Bears Cnissodioctes off the rising ground;  
 Then drags him o'er the lake, depriv'd of breath, 75  
 And, downward plunging, sinks his soul to death.  
 But now the great Psycarpax shines afar,  
 (Scarce he so great whole loss provok'd the war),  
 Swift to revenge his fatal jav'lin fled,  
 And thro' the liver struck Pelusius dead; 80  
 His freckled corpse before the victor fell,  
 His soul indignant sought the shades of hell.  
 This saw Pelobates, and from the flood,  
 Lifts with both hands a monstrous mass of mud.  
 The cloud obscene o'er all the warrior flies, 85  
 Dishonours his brown face, and blots his eyes.  
 Enrag'd, and wildly sputt'ring, from the shore  
 A stone immense of size the warrior bore;  
 A load for lab'ring earth, whose bulk to raise,  
 Asks ten degen'rate mice of modern days: 90  
 Full to the leg arrives the crushing wound:  
 The frog, supportless, writhes upon the ground.  
 Thus flush'd, the victor wars with matchless force,  
 Till loud Craugasides arrests his course:  
 Hoarse croaking threats precede; with fatal speed 95  
 Deep thro' the belly runs the pointed reed,  
 Then, strongly tugg'd, return'd imbru'd with gore,  
 And on the pile his reeking entrails bore.  
 The lame Sitophagus, oppress'd with pain,  
 Creeps from the desp'rate dangers of the plain: 100



**Book III. FROGS and MICE. 213**

And where the ditches rising weeds supply,  
To spread their lowly shades beneath the sky,  
There lurks the silent mouse reliev'd of heat,  
And, safe imbower'd, avoids the chance of fate.  
But here Troxartes, Phylagnathus there, 105  
Whirl the dire furies of the pointed spear :  
Then where the foot around its ankle plies,  
Troxartes wounds, and Phylagnathus flies,  
Halts to the pool, a safe retreat to find,  
And trails a dangling length of leg behind. 110  
The mouse still urges, still the frog retires,  
And half in anguish of the flight expires ;  
Then pious ardor young Praxæus brings,  
Betwixt the fortune of contending kings :  
Lank, harmless frog ! with forces hardly grown, 115  
He darts the reed in combats not his own,  
Which faintly tinkling on Troxartes' shield,  
Hangs at the point, and drops upon the field.

Now nobly towering o'er the rest appears  
A gallant prince that far transcends his years, 120  
Pride of his fire, and glory of his house,  
And more a Mars in combat than a mouse :  
His action bold, robust his ample frame,  
And Meridarpax his resounding name  
The warrior, singled from the fighting croud, 125  
Boasts the dire honours of his arms aloud ;  
Then strutting near the lake, with looks elate,  
Threats all its nations with approaching fate.  
And such his strength the silver lakes around,  
Might roll their waters o'er unpeopled ground. 130  
But pow'rful Jove, who shews no less his grace  
To frogs that perish, than to human race,  
Felt soft compassion rising in his soul,  
And shook his sacred head that shook the pole.  
Then thus to all the gazing powers began. 135  
The fire of Gods, and frogs, and mouse, and man.

What seas of blood I view, what worlds of slain?  
 An Iliad rising from a day's campaign!  
 How fierce his jav'lin, o'er the trembling lakes,  
 The black furr'd hero, Meridarpax, shakes! 140  
 Unless some fav'ring Deity descend,  
 Soon will the frogs loquacious empire end.  
 Let dreadful Pallas wing'd with pity fly,  
 And make her ægis blaze before his eye:  
 While Mars, refulgent on his rattling car, 145  
 Arrests his raging rival of the war.

He ceas'd, reclining with attentive head,  
 When thus the glorious God of combats said,  
 Nor Pallas, Jove! tho' Pallas take the field,  
 With all the terrors of her hissing shield; 150  
 Nor Mars himself, tho' Mars in armour bright  
 Ascend his car, and wheel amidst the fight;  
 Not these can drive the desp'rate mouse afar,  
 And change the fortunes of the bleeding war.  
 Let all go forth, all heav'n in arms arise; 155  
 Or lanch thy own red thunder from the skies:  
 Such ardent bolts as flew that wondrous day,  
 When heaps of Titans mix'd with mountains lay,  
 When all the giant-race enormous fell,  
 And huge Enceladus was hurl'd to hell. 160

'Twas thus th'Armipotent advis'd the Gods,  
 When from his throne the Cloud-compeller nods;  
 Deep length'ning thunders run from pole to pole,  
 Olympus trembles as the thunders roll.  
 Then swift he whirls the brandish'd bolt around, 165  
 And headlong darts it at the distant ground;  
 The bolt, discharg'd, inwrapt with lightning flies,  
 And rends its flaming passage through the skies:  
 Then earth's inhabitants, the nibblers, shake,  
 And frogs, the dwellers in the waters, quake. 170  
 Yet still the mice advance their dread design,  
 And the last danger threatens the croaking line;

**Book III. FROGS and MICE. 215**

Till Jove, that inly mourn'd the loss they bore,  
With strange assistance fill'd the frighted shore.

Pour'd from the neighb'ring strand, deform'd to view,  
They march, a sudden unexpected crew. 176

Strong suits of armour round their bodies close,  
Which like thick anvils blunt the force of blows ;  
In wheeling marches turn'd, oblique they go ;  
With harpy claws their limbs divide below ; 180

Fell sheers the passage to their mouth command ;  
From out the flesh the bones by nature stand ;  
Broad spread their backs, their shining shoulders rise,  
Unnumber'd joints distort their lengthen'd thighs,  
With nervous cords their hands are firmly brac'd, 185  
Their round black eye-balls in their bosom plac'd ;  
On eight long feet the wondrous warriors tread,  
And either end alike supplies a head.

These to call crabs, mere mortal wits agree :  
But Gods have other names for things than we. 190

Now, where the jointures from their loins depend,  
The heroes tails with sev'ring grasps they rend.  
Here, short of feet, depriv'd the pow'r to fly,  
There without hands upon the field they lie.  
Wrench'd from their holds, and scatter'd all around,  
The blended lances heap'd the cumber'd ground. 196  
Helpless amazement, fear pursuing fear,  
And mad confusion through their host appear.  
O'er the wild waste with headlong flight they go,  
Or creep conceal'd in vaulted holes below. 200

But down Olympus, to the western seas,  
Far-shooting Phœbus drove his fainter rays ;  
And a whole war (so Jove ordain'd) begun,  
Was fought, and ceas'd, in one revolving sun.

**F I N I S.**





